OTHER SHEEP

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A STUDY OF THE PEOPLES OF INDIA, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE COLLISION BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND HINDUISM

BY

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'There is a lion in the way; a lion is in the streets.'

PROVERBS.

'The lion is not so fierce as they paint him.'

HERBERT.

PREFACE

'Ask of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance.'

Beyond the narrow boundaries of Europe extends a vast territory thick-sown with a various population of heathen humanity. The pulse of civilization, throbbing so furiously in the West, seems over this enormous area scarcely to beat at all. It is as if evolution had circumscribed its energies to the coasts of Christendom, as if humanity had chosen Europe for its line of march and made Asia its perpetual camp of rest, as if the West represented the creative week-days of mankind and the East its everlasting sabbath.

In Europe, amid the roar of wheels and in the glare of the furnace, science seeks for truth, the politician labours for millennium, religion preaches struggle, and humanity wrestles for a destiny. In Asia, where sleep and silence brood upon the pensive earth, science sits with folded hands, the politician has yet hardly opened his eyes, an immemorial religion whispers to the soul to surrender, and humanity dreams of nothing but annihilation for its final good. The stream of existence floods through Europe turbulent and

foaming to the invisible ocean of eternity; in Asia the waters of life are like a stagnant fen.

Whether Europe has any responsibility towards Asia, or whether Christianity owes any duty to heathendom, East and West have met and the hemispheres of geography and the zones of the whole earth have become the one world of man. This, for good or for evil, is accomplished; and though the stream of European civilization has only begun to stir the marge of Asian stagnation, nevertheless the two waters have actually touched, are now inevitably destined to commingle, and either Europe must be swamped and overwhelmed by Asia or Asia swept forward concurrently with Europe by the same impulse of progress, the same impulse of faith in ultimate perfection.

Awakening Asia is the new planet in the political skies. And the supreme question for civilization is whether she wake to the moral restraints and sanctifying respects of the Christian religion, or to the logical nihilism of an honest materialism.

There is a foolish notion abroad that Christianity —Eastern in its origin—is the religion best fitted for the West, and Hinduism—an idolatrous superstition surviving from the dark night of paganism —the religion best fitted for an awakening India. Those who cherish this notion not only ignore the consideration that if Christianity be true it is true for all mankind, but would have us think that an Orient waking to the knowledge and culture of the Occident will still satisfy its soul with the myth of its own departed darkness. Far from this folly, is the

truth of things; and nothing could be more fatal to civilization than to let a loose prejudice against missionaries blind the eyes of Europe to this certain truth, that Awakening Asia will either rise up in the faith of Christianity or in the no-faith of a truculent materialism.

Materialism in England is saturated through and through with the ethical ideas of Jesus; our intellectual agnosticism is moral with the inexpungable leaven of Christianity. But in such a country as India, men who grow out of the superstitions of their ancestors, stand empty-souled in the midst of the universe and have nothing in their minds but the impulse of struggle for existence. Unless this growth out of superstition be accompanied by a growth in Christianity, calamity beyond the wit of man to imagine must eventually overtake the human race. Let these dense millions once believe that morality is a social contrivance, that spiritual responsibility is a mere invention of the priest, that life has no immortal significance for the individual, that existence here is nothing more serious or complex than a struggle to gratify the sensual appetites; let this perfectly logical inference from the dogmas of materialism once be drawn by the cunning and inquisitive mind of the East, and at once earth would witness that frightful spectacle of which the virtuous man stands most in dread—the human race organizing itself for evil.

In contrast to this threatening night of anarchy, is the bright dawn that awaits the whole earth in an East risen to the call of Christ. And no one who

has discussed religion with the peoples of India can hesitate a single moment to believe that Christ is as able to call the East as He is able to save and maintain the West. I do not defend all missionaries of the Christian religion, and as this book will show, I disapprove profoundly of many methods hitherto employed to convert the peoples of India; but my reason is convinced that the true religion revealed by Jesus in the East is a religion not only 'suitable' to India, and not only the one religion which can elevate the millions of India, but that those millions are both ready and eager to embrace the faith of Christ when it is presented to them in the spirit of its founder. In India, as still in Europe,

> The hungry sheep look up and are not fed;

but everywhere there are signs that the Little Flock is enlarging its fold, that the Other Sheep are being called, and that Christ will yet draw All Men unto Him. The pages which follow demonstrate the truth of this assertion.

It is as well perhaps that I should begin by offering a propitiatory sacrifice to those stern and minatory guardians of the Public Intellect who, not without good reason, clap damnation on any book of foreign travel which seems to them shot from the press with the imprint of a return-ticket visible and offensive on its title page. And I cannot better placate these critics, nor more effectually get the interest and curiosity of my readers, than by furnishing an account of the strange and romantic person in whose company I made most of my

journeys and whose matchless knowledge of the peoples of India was laid frankly and unsparingly open to me by the generous hand of affectionate friendship.

It is not the length of time he spends in a country, but rather the people he meets and the sympathy he brings to an understanding of the new environment, which most help the inquiring traveller to form a right judgment and best enable him to present a faithful account of his exploration.

My credentials are the gentleman whom I now present to my readers under his Indian name of Fakir Singh. No one, I believe, is better acquainted with the mind and soul of India; no one has ever penetrated further into the holy of holies of her immemorial solitude and seclusion; no one can pretend to a knowledge anything like so intimate and sympathetic of her inner life, her human heart, and her troubled soul. When he is describing the peoples of India, one exclaims—'ce n'est plus la répresentation de la vie, c'est la vie même, la vie humaine palpitante et frémissante, et non pas seulement la vie extérieure, mais la vie intérieure, la vie mystérieuse de l'âme.' For he is neither a blundering theosophist shut up in a tower with a few Indian philosophers as ignorant of Sanskrit as of physical science, nor yet a British Official pestered out of his life by incessant correspondence and fenced about by the necessary pomp and circumstance of his position; far from all this, he is an amiable scholar, a curious inquirer, and a gentle, earnest Christian, wandering into the villages and

homes of the peoples, sitting under their trees with them, sharing their simple food, speaking their languages like one of themselves, observing their customs as naturally as if he had been born into them, and drawing from them their fullest confidence and their entire faith by means of a sympathy only perfect because it is spiritually and intellectually sincere.

This unique person, then, is at once the inspiration and warrant of my book. To make his acquaintance was one of the chief enthusiasms with which I journeyed Eastwards to discover the place of Christianity in India; and, although I do not agree with all he has to say, and although I gained from other men, such as Sir George Clarke, Sir John Hewett, and Sir Louis Dane, much striking and useful information, and although many of the opinions I express in this book may give even pain to the amiable Fakir, still, gratefully do I acknowledge that it is this extraordinary man who brought me nearest to the heart of India and who seems to me now the fittest propitiation that I can offer at the altar of judgment.

CONTENTS

FAKIR SINGH

THERE is no man living, perhaps, whose career bears so strong a resemblance to the history of Don Quixote as the turbaned and dhotied Englishman in India known as Fakir Singh. And it is no mere caprice of fancy which sees in his long, lean, and cadaverous countenance, with its strained expression of the dreamer and its dignified note of spiritual austerity, a likeness, a remarkable and compelling likeness, to the great gentleman of La Mancha.

Fakir Singh, till middle life, was a Mr. Tucker, of the Indian Civil Service. Born of pious parents, he grew up in the atmosphere of Victorian Evangelicalism, and like so many members of the Civil Service in those days, gave up the time of his leisure to promoting a knowledge of Christianity among the natives of his district. He was a great Sahib administering justice, faithfully performing the duties of his office, and teaching the heathen from his place of overlord the story of Christ and the discipline of the Church.

Just as the reading of many books on chivalry turned the brain of Don Quixote and made him a knight-errant as nearly Christlike as any figure in the field of art, so the reading of many treatises and tracts on religion worked upon the heart and soul of our Indian Civil Servant till he abandoned the

common ways of life and became at last as romantic a knight-errant of Christianity as ever begged his bread and slept under the stars. A single sermon in a journal published by the Salvation Army in London was this good gentleman's culminating Feliciano de Silva. 'Here is the true light!' he exclaimed, and with new joy in his heart set himself to read the little newspaper from beginning to end.

Instead of discussions on dogma, instead of painful exegesis and mournful lamentations on the faithlessness of that generation, in this humble journal he found story after story of triumph and conquest—narrations of souls rescued from the edge of ruin and spirits dragged from perdition by the hands of rejoicing faith. It was like a trumpet to his soul. Straightway he applied for leave, set sail for England, and attended the first possible meeting of the Salvation Army, at which General Booth was speaking.

The eloquence of the old General, and the magnetism of that remarkable personality, fired him to the pitch of enthusiasm. The call for self-sacrifice was like a music in his heart. The thought of *battle* against sin, sorrow, and ignorance worked like a madness in his brain. He presented himself before General Booth after the meeting and stated his desire to become a Salvationist. He was asked to call at the Headquarters of the Salvation Army on the following day. He found himself cautiously received. The General hesitated to accept the sacrifice. In a few years' time the volunteer, a rather fine-looking gentleman, would be entitled to his pension. Surely it was better to wait—better that he should help the Salvation Army as a friend and see when the day came for retirement whether he

was still willing to bear the hard life and unyielding discipline of a soldier. This consideration had to be weighed. But not for long. The volunteer called again. 'I have retired from the Civil Service,' he announced; 'I am now penniless; you must take me; there is no one else to whom I can go.'

To win India for Christianity was the master-thought of this Fakir who had sacrificed place and pension for his religion. And with this master-thought there beat upon his brain the saying of Keshab Chandar Sen, founder of the Brahmo Samaj, that never would India surrender to Christ so long as the Saviour of the white races appeared before her peoples in European dress.

The wise and statesmanlike views of General Booth harmonized with the convictions of the Fakir. India, if she wanted the Salvation Army, must pay for the Salvation Army. No mission could be considered safe which depended upon foreign countries for its support. Anything in the nature of buying converts was to be avoided. India must be taught to feel that Christianity was a blessing passionately to be sought and gratefully to be received, something for which they must be ready to make sacrifices and endure persecution. The necessity for self-support was the first and chief consideration; and this consideration led to the decision, that whatever system was introduced it must be sufficiently inexpensive to succeed among the poor and humble classes of India.

Accordingly, the Fakir decided, with the blessing of his General, to adopt the native dress, to follow native customs, and in everything to bring the mission of the Salvation Army into as close a correspondence with the traditions, habits, and manners of India as the nature of Christianity would allow.

At first official India was filled with consternation at the news of an invasion by the Salvationists. The Fakir had scarce landed in Bombay before he was arrested and cast into prison. It was held that the methods of the Salvation Army would imperil the prestige of the ruling race, that its bands and street-corner preaching would lead to riots among the conflicting peoples of the Empire. Men in high office, who are now the friends and warm admirers of the Fakir, looked with genuine horror and alarm at this new disturbance of India's difficult peace.

But when the first storm had abated, our Don Quixote set out alone on a journey of exploration, to judge how best the mission of the Salvation Army might be set in motion for the good and blessing of India. 'I had in my soul,' he told me, 'a desperate determination to break down at any and every cost all barriers that divided us from the peoples of India.'

His equipment was meagre. Clothed in turban and dhoti, with a sack for his bedding and a small tin box for his papers, he set out barefoot and unaccompanied on a journey as romantic and critical as anything adventured by the Knight of the Rueful Countenance. He is well acquainted with Indian customs, he speaks most of the languages and dialects, and he has to perfection that exquisite sense of courtesy and thoughtfulness which alone can ensure the European from giving offence to the always suspicious and self-conscious native mind. But how great the plunge and how hazardous the venture! He was a Sahib and the son of a Sahib. Such a Sahib wandering about the country barefoot and in native dress, begging his curry and rice at the door of the peasants, sleeping under the shade of village trees, and speaking of Christ and the new

life of conversion to the water-drawers at the well and the reapers in the rice-field, might indeed provoke curiosity and attract the multitude; but what privation and discomfort he must endure, what risks of disease and death he must encounter, and what opposition, ridicule, and contempt he must expect from the people of his own race and traditions. Nevertheless, he had in his soul that desperate determination to break down at any and every cost all barriers that divide us from the peoples of India; and he was fired and exhilarated by the thought that at last Christ should appear before Easterns as an Eastern, and the religion of Christ reach to their souls not as an alien patronage of the ruling race, but as a liberation and a blessing from God.

One of the first places he visited was Naini Tal, and scarcely had he got to the Indian Dharamsala, or rest-house, before a policeman appeared with a warrant for his arrest. He was taken before the young magistrate who had issued the order, probably as a jest, and after answering a few questions was set at liberty. The superior officer of the young magistrate, who was a sincere Christian, hearing of this arrest became very indignant, severely reprimanded his subordinate, and sent the Fakir a donation of three hundred rupees. Thus harried and thus encouraged, the barefoot missionary passed to Almorah, where his fame had preceded him, and where he found himself honourably welcomed by the Sadr Amin, one of the leading Hindus of the place, who begged him to be his guest. The Fakir acknowledged the graciousness of the invitation, but reminded the Hindu that he was of such a high caste that the low caste people of the place would not be able to approach the Fakir did he accept the great

man's hospitality. But to this the Sadr Amin replied:—

> Zat pat puchhe nako
> Jo Har Ko bhaje, so Har Ka ho;

which being interpreted means, 'Let no one ask his caste; he who worships God belongs to God.' So the invitation was accepted. People thronged to the house, questions were asked and answered, the religion of Christ was presented in its supremest aspect as liberation from sin, and perhaps for the first time in that place the animosities and antipathies both of religion and race were entirely forgotten in the unifying apprehension of a universal God. For the return journey to Naini Tal, the Sadr Amin insisted upon lending the Fakir a pony, and not only rode the whole way at his side, but acted as his host when the town was reached. Moreover, hearing that at an English meeting a hundred and one rupees had been subscribed for the Salvation Army, he said: 'We, too, must have a meeting in my house, and we also will have a collection.' His joy was excessive when he found that the gifts of the thronging crowd in his house surpassed the subscription of the English meeting by two rupees.

Years afterwards General Booth was in Calcutta, and a leading English official mentioned to him a conversation he had had with the Sadr Amin soon after this visit of the Fakir. 'Sadr Amin Sahib,' he said, 'you have always been regarded as a staunch Hindu, and as one having no sympathy with Christianity; how is it, then, that you received this Salvationist into your house and even presided for him at his meeting?' 'Sahib,' was the reply, 'had I seen Christianity such as this before, I should myself have been a Christian.'

At Batala, one of his next stopping-places, our Fakir was accosted by a Hindu in the streets who asked him to what religion he belonged. 'To the Jiwan-Mukti Pant—the Get-Saved-While-You-Are Alive religion,' was the good-natured reply. 'Where are you going to get food?' asked the Hindu. 'God will provide,' answered the Fakir. 'Come to my house; honour me by coming,' said the Hindu eagerly. The Fakir raised the same objection as in Almorah. 'But my house shall be open to all, none shall be turned away,' replied the high-caste Hindu, and the invitation being accepted he proved as good as his word. The house was soon packed to the doors and beyond. The people watched the Sahib eating his meal with his fingers from the plantain leaf on which it was served; and when the necessary mouth-washing and finger-washing were concluded, they asked for some 'Gyan,' or religious instruction.

The people listened with intense interest. There, like one of themselves, sat the white Fakir who had eaten after their custom, who wore their dress, and who spoke their language eloquently and without check. He brought no charge against their own religion, he made no mock of their gods and goddesses, he expressed no anger against their priests. But with his pale face full of a solemn earnestness, his strained eyes shining with enthusiasm for his Christ, he told of a religion so exactly fitted to their needs, so entirely and wonderfully Eastern in its spirit, that they marvelled to think it was Christianity—the religion of the demons who take life and eat the flesh of pigs.*

The heart of all Indian religions is the desire for Liberation. Persuaded by an immemorial

* Europeans are widely known among Indians as 'demons'

pessimism that existence is always accompanied by pain, they listen eagerly to the Brahman or the Buddhist who teaches them how to escape from the curse of life. It is this inherited and unalterable conviction of the Eastern mind which the Fakir first seized upon and has ever afterwards used for bringing home to the heart and brain of India the religion of Christ. The word Salvation becomes with him the Indian word for Liberation. The religion of Christ is presented as a Liberation, and not as a Liberation from an existence incurably bad, but from the sins and ignorances which make that existence seem incurably bad. It is not a Liberation from life, but a Liberation from despair, death, and something worse: it is not a Liberation into annihilation, but a Liberation into everlasting joy and felicity; and, moreover, it is not a Liberation painfully to be earned beyond the grave, but a Liberation gratefully and joyfully to be experienced in the present world. It is as Life, and as Life More Abundantly, that the white Fakir insists upon the Liberation of Christianity.

In this manner he was speaking to the great crowd in the Hindu's house at Batala, when voices were suddenly heard at the door and the place became invaded by a body of native Christians from a neighbouring Mission. They had heard of the Fakir's arrival, and had come with a request that he would visit them. As chance would have it, an aunt of the Fakir was working in this Mission, the Miss Tucker known to readers of that generation as 'A.L.O.E.' It was difficult, therefore, for the solitary to refuse the invitation. But before setting out for the Mission, he retired to the shade of a tree and there held converse with some hundreds of Hindus and Muhamadans, while his former

friends hurried to the bazaar and returned with sweetmeats and milk for his refreshment. When he did set out in the evening for the Mission, it was in the company of over two hundred Indians who went with him all the way, a mile beyond the city walls, and remained for a meeting which astonished and delighted the heart of the orthodox Miss Tucker.

Thus cheered and encouraged, our traveller journeyed to Amritsar, the holy city of the Sikhs. 'It was dark when I left the train,' he told me. 'I walked through the Hall Darwaza, or gateway of the city, which was named after Colonel Hall, my official superior when I was first appointed to Amritsar as a young civilian. I had not proceeded far when a Sikh soldier, who had been a fellow-passenger in the train, came running after me and inquired where I intended to pass the night. "Under some tree," I told him; "I am even now searching for such a place." "There is no need for that," said the soldier; "I have a friend at the Golden Temple, one of the priests; gladly he will receive you." I was delighted at the idea of sleeping in the shadow of the Golden Temple, and cheerfully accepted the soldier's invitation. The priest received us very cordially, and insisted upon my having a charpoy, or string-bed, for the night, though I assured him that the floor would do quite well. A Muhamadan merchant, who had known me ten years before, when I was an Assistant-Commissioner in the station, had joined us on the way, and now went off to the bazaar and brought some milk plentifully sweetened with sugar. As he carried it with his own hands through the streets, his tears dropped into it; and he afterwards told me with what deep emotion he watched me raise to my lips the drink

watered by the tears of his soul. On the following morning a space was cleared for me in one of the large rooms where the Granth Sahib, or sacred book of the Sikhs, was usually read. This was not in the main temple, but in one of the side buildings attached to it, near the priest's quarters where I had been accommodated for the night. It was a Sunday morning. You may imagine my feelings as I addressed an audience of Sikhs in the name of Christ at the very heart and centre of the Sikh religion. Towards noon a carriage drew up, and Babu Rallia Ram, a Christian lawyer whom I had known well in the past, appeared to claim me as his guest. My Sikh hosts, however, were unwilling to surrender me, and they only agreed that I should go for two hours on a visit to my friend and his family, on condition that I returned and held a meeting in the Guru ka bagh, the garden attached to the temple. I went away with my friend, who was astonished to find me in the Golden Temple, and returned to the Sikhs according to my word. There were several hundreds waiting for me, and a move was made to displace one of the priests from his low pulpit where he was reading the Granth Sahib. I saw that it would hurt his feelings to be supplanted, and asked whether another place could not be found. I was conducted to an empty talao or tank, the steps of which made an excellent auditorium, and there we held a most interesting meeting. Never before, and never since, I believe, has a Christian been allowed this privilege. The romance of it must strike the dullest. The significance of it should surely influence the wise. This one incident furnishes, I am sure, justification, if justification is necessary, for our adoption of Indian costume and methods. Here was the Salvation

Army installed in the very heart and headquarters of Sikhism, not only as an honoured guest, but as a teacher of religion. When that evening I knelt in prayer at the priest's quarters there were others who knelt with me and accepted the Way, the Truth, and the Life. What became of them, or whether they remained faithful, I do not know; but round Amritsar and Batala at the present day we have some of our most successful and encouraging work. Our followers there are certainly numbered by thousands.'

It was never intended, he tells me, that the fakir system should be generally adopted, but it was necessary to cross the dividing line and discover the best way of reaching the heart of India. Not all the officers of the Salvation Army, but many of them in those pioneer days begged their food, slept in the open air, and trusted to the hospitality of the people for their daily bread. I have talked with several of these people, men and women, and they one and all speak with delight of those hard and difficult days of pioneering. Some of these people, particularly the women, made a profound impression upon me, and one was touched by their almost passionate love for the Indian peoples, against whom they never speak a word of harm. The work done by some of them, perhaps, exceeds the accomplishment of Fakir Singh, and it would be one of the most romantic books in the world that told their story in the full.* But they are content to toil, nameless and very often solitary, and the one earthly reward they seek is the love and confidence of the childlike peoples of India. In this way a close intimacy has been established by all of them with the various races; and in the case of Fakir Singh a knowledge

* See Note, page 340

of the people, always remarkable and profound, has become probably as absolute and unique as is possible to any European mind.

These brief details from the romantic life of Fakir Singh at the beginning of his great adventure, will, I hope, persuade the reader that I have enjoyed unusual opportunities for penetrating behind the veil of Indian mystery. For I have travelled from one end of India to the other in his company. I have dipped my hand into his wayside bowl of curry and rice; I have walked with him through palm forests in Southern India, shared the hospitality of his roof in the midst of Himalayan snows; listened to his stories, questioned him, stood at his elbows on the platforms of railway stations and in the streets of cities, attended his public meetings in villages and towns, and on a hundred occasions enjoyed the frank and pleasant intimacy of his conversation. Other men I have met in India, greater intellects and more powerful personalities, whose acquaintance with Indian thought is at once catholic and sympathetic; but, as I said before, none could give me so close and intimate a knowledge of the real and human India as this wandering Don Quixote of religion. Therefore, though I am conscious of many disagreements with him, it is only of him I think when seeking to placate my critics and winning for myself the confidence of my readers.

Would that I had but a little of the genius of Cervantes that I might make the reader feel the charm and graciousness of this noble gentleman, whose perfect balance of laughter and tears, whose exact symmetry of pathos and comedy, whose nice equivalence of sanity and madness make him true brother of Don Quixote. In the manner of his

life a fanatic, there is nothing in his soul of the fanatic's inhumanity. The severity of his visage is lightened by a frequent smile, and occasional bursts of good laughter witness to a spirit of tolerance, good-nature, and cheerful benevolence such as you will never find in a thoroughbred bigot. Full of enthusiasm, for ever dreaming dreams and projecting Utopias, he is at the same time a calm and wise administrator, trusted, respected, and consulted by some of the very first men in India on matters needing a cool head and a judicious temperament. He has the facts and figures of India at his fingers-ends; he could write a blue-book on the weaving-industry, silkworms, and irrigation; and very easily and pleasantly, believe me, he could keep you up to the small hours of the morning talking about the various mulberries suitable for India, the need for a crusade against plague-spreading rats, the wisdom of planting the right kind of eucalyptus in districts infected by malaria, and the utility of cassava as a drought-resisting plant which provides a wholesome food (tapioca) both for men and animals. But all through the march of these industrial and political ideas, one is conscious in him above everything else of the idealist who has made the great sacrifice, of the dreamer who has seen a vision, and of the saint hungering and thirsting for the salvation of mankind. He is a man busied about many things, but centred in the reality of existence. He rides forth in turban and dhoti on the Rozinante of Salvationism to perform prodigies of valour and to win against all the giants of this world no less a kingdom than India; but, in spite of his strange dress and the passion of his challenge, there is in his heart nothing more than a great

love for humanity and the simple faith of a little child.

He is such a man who founds no empires and bequeathes no throne, but who inspires the affection of friends and the respect of enemies, and leaves behind him a memory of the noblest virtue and the purest heroism.

THE CHILDREN OF INDIA

It is an experience of unforgettable enchantment to pass for the first time from the hurly of England's wintry skies to the calm azure and pellucid beauty of the East. A blinding snowstorm and bitter cold at Brindisi, a melancholy passage through leaden seas and drenching rain to Port Said, and then, suddenly, as if half the world had dropped away behind one—air that is like melted pearls, a sky blue as forget-me-nots, a sun red-gold as the core of a furnace, and stillness

> . . . . quiet as a Nun
> Breathless with adoration.

It is as though a magician had translated one in sleep to some delicious palace of ensorcellment in the upper air. Through the long corridor of the Suez Canal, with its tapestries of tawny desert and sombre palms and caravans of camels, this magician leads the wondering traveller into the wide gallery of the Red Sea, haunted by ghosts of Israelites and murmurous with the wheels of Pharaoh's chariots. Along this gallery whispering of the past, the traveller is led to the sunset curtain of Aden, which the magician draws to one side, disclosing the glimmering atrium of the Arabian Sea. And now across this vast and lovely vestibule, whose roof at night burns with the brightest stars, and where the

Southern Cross hangs like a window into heaven above the verge of the moonlit mosaic of the sea, drawing always more joy into his heart and feeling himself more and more the victim of hallucination, the traveller moves into bluer waters and under more burning skies, till he comes at last to the Gateway of the Kingdom of Dreams, and finds himself standing on the shore of a New World.

Everything is different. The air is heavy with a new fragrance. The traveller is conscious, in a drowsy somnambulism, of a breathing and a scent, of a glamour and a heat, which are new to him and make a strange atmosphere for his soul.

He is aware of change absolute and complete, both in the heavens and in the various humanity passing before his eyes like figures in a dream. The sun, little more intolerable than the hottest of our summer days, the same sun that was pleasant and innocuous in Egypt, has here a devil and is full of peril for the human brain. It dazzles the white walls of the houses, it burns upon the overhead wires of electric trams, it glows on the cobbles of the streets, it blazes on the dark leaves and hanging dusty roots of the banyan tree—and its light is not the jovial gladness of rejoicing summer, but the anger of hostility and the menace of madness. You do not rejoice in this beautiful sun, you fear it and you may even come to hate it.

But this fear of the sun is forgotten in the new and insistent witchery of India's humanity. The traveller finds himself staring and open-mouthed, like a child at a puppet show. He sees a beautiful city of noble architecture and spacious streets occupied and possessed by such strange and incongruous people that their seriousness and solemnity strike him at first as a wonderful jest. It is not at

all with offence to the Indians, but rather as a stricture on the parochialism of the traveller, that I compare this first sensation of amused astonishment to the feeling of the ridiculous which overtakes a visitor to zoological gardens. One laughs at solemn giraffes, serious pelicans, and disdainful ostriches chiefly because they are not laughing self-consciously at themselves. 'What are you laughing at?' demanded an ugly bus driver of a giggling cabman. 'What! don't you ever laugh when you look in the glass?' was the rejoinder, ending in the chastening reproof—'why, a joke's thrown away on you.' 'Un paysage,' says Amiel, 'est un état d'âme.' Coleridge teaches that the passion and the life of outward forms have their fountains in the human soul. If the traveller in India on his first shock of astonishment wonder why the remarkable people crowding the streets and thronging the open shops are not smiling at their own absurdity, it is manifestly because he is centred in his insularity and blinded by his habituated Westernism.

But he may surely be excused for this first gaucherie. To begin with there is the question of hats. In Europe eccentricity in head-dress is the exclusive province of women; in India it belongs solely to men. The little, thin-armed, straight-legged women of India go by without hats of any kind, either exposing their coco-nut-oiled black hair entirely to the blaze of the sun, or else drawing half-way over their heads a portion of the cloth which only partially conceals their bodies. On the other hand, the good gentlemen of India sport every kind of hat imaginable. The old and bespectacled Parsi goes by in a tall, brimless, and patent-leather erection which strikes a compromise between the

mitre of a bishop and a domestic coal-scuttle stood upon its end; the younger and frock-coated Parsi saunters along under a little dove-coloured dome like a pudding-basin with just a narrow pediment of fur for the rim. Here comes a bearded Muhamadan with a turban so huge that one thinks at first he is a dhobi carrying home somebody's washing on his head; and here comes a jolly little fat Hindu wearing a scarlet turban no bigger than the pad affected by our peripatetic adventurers in muffins and crumpets. Between these two sizes and shapes in turbans, you see on the heads of the unconscious people a hundred fantastic contrivances in swaddling-cloth of every colour under the sun. If all the tulips in Kew Gardens started to walk about at a level of five feet and a few inches from the ground, really they would not make so notable a chiaroscuro as the turbans of an Indian city.

In addition to the turbans you have the fez of the cab-driver, the chocolate-coloured skull cap of the Kashmiri, the flat fur roll and flowing drapery of the Dervish, the comical wide-brimmed straw hat of the Chinaman, the sort of busby or bearskin of the hillman, the embroidered smoking-cap of the Muhamadan, the polo-cap of the Babu, and the mountainous rust-coloured natural hair of the mendicant and the pilgrim. Moreover, these masculine adornments of the head are only a detail in the general raiment of the peoples, which is so diverse and many-coloured that it is like a pageant to stand at any street corner or to sit at any window of the city.

Most of the people go barefoot, and the clothing of a vast multitude of them suggests nothing more complicated than a bathing costume topped by a towel round the head. The garments of the women

reach a little below the knees, leave the arms naked, and disclose a part of the sides; the colours of these saris are always beautiful and becoming, and never give the most exacting taste the smallest sense of vulgarity or absurdity. Many of the men wear Western clothes, but some of them as a concession to Oriental feeling leave the front flap of their linen shirts hanging outside, like a sporan, from under their waistcoats. Parsis affect broadcloth, or alpaca frock coat and linen trousers, but consider a cravat either a superfluity or a wanton obscuration of a gilded collar-stud. The true native, however, sticks to his handsome robes or his becoming dhoti, and the dazzling streets of the cities are made joyful and beautiful by these splendid colours and these gorgeous folds. Nothing can exceed in dignity the figure of a tall Mussulman, with flowing beard and eagle eyes, clad from head to foot in shimmering white, standing on the steps of a mosque and fresh from his meditations with Allah surveying the toy-like and doll's-house effect of a native bazaar. And nothing that I have ever seen excels in beauty the figure of a Hindu woman dressed in a gold-edged robe of royal blue crossing a green rice-field with one chocolate-coloured arm raised to support a brazen vessel on her head, the other swinging, sun-glinted, at her side, with as much strength as dignity. Of a truth there is beauty and nobility among these peoples as well as drollery and childishness; but it is not at first that one perceives the glory of their vestments. It is easier for the curious European to laugh at the scarlet-dyed beard of an old copper-coloured gentleman incessantly munching nuts while he squats listening on the open-air counter of his shop to the reading of a religious book by a spectacled friend

with a tag of hair projecting like a rat's tail from the back of his shaven head, than to admire the beauty of the total pageant.

Perhaps it is the blending of dignity and absurdity which leaves the final impression on a traveller's mind and finds him with mixed feelings when he comes to sort his ideas. For instance, there is a handsome tree-shaded road in Bombay, running between gardens and the sea, where the rich and fashionable take the air from five to eight o'clock of an evening, and where you may see more splendour in five minutes than any capital of Europe could show you in a week; here you may behold in the midst of motor cars and lordly chariots a fine brougham drawn by a pair of tall horses, with two flunkeys on the box and two flunkeys at the back, carrying in its drab-lined interior a Parsi lady dressed in the most delicate pale silks imaginable, who, leaning back on her cushions, rests a naked biscuit-coloured foot on the ledge of the door, every toe twinkling in the sun. And I think that if one looks long enough there is always a humorous nakedness protruding somewhere or another from the pomp and glory of the gorgeous East.

Above and beyond, infinitely beyond the interest of the clothes, is the interest of Eastern physiognomy. The traveller soon learns the truth of a statement made by Sir Bamfylde Fuller in his 'Studies of Indian Life and Sentiment,' that it requires actual experience to realize the astounding truth that '*the population of a district or a town is a collection of different nationalities—almost different species—of mankind.*' This same author declares that it is hardly too much to say that '*the inhabitants of India are differentiated into over*

two thousand species of mankind, which in the physical relations of life have as little in common as the inmates of a zoological garden.' You cannot imagine, unless you have visited India and really studied the peoples, how this wonderful and amazing diversity contributes to the delight and interest of the country. The traveller, new to this crowding pageant of humanity, is not a calm and critical observer among one people solid in a single nationalism, but is a drifting and bewildered unit shouldered and jostled by over two thousand species of humanity, each separated from the other by unbridgeable gulfs of thought and feeling. His politeness to one is almost an affront to a hundred others; his familiarity with the language of one is but double-dutch to the rest. The Muhamadans are divided into sects that are at sword's point with one another; the Hindus are multiplied into many nations and hundreds of castes; there is schism among the Buddhists; and the hills of the north are inhabited by half-savage and entirely savage peoples each as separate and distinct from the other as all are separate and distinct from the peoples of the plains. With an area only a little more than half that of Australasia, India and Ceylon carry under the stars a fifth of the entire human race, and this fifth, packed into so small a compass, is divided into over two thousand species of mankind, utters its thoughts in twenty main languages and over five hundred differing dialects, and is infinitely more split up and fragmentary than all the peoples of Europe, both in traditions and the common habits of daily life.

This astonishing variety appears in the faces of the peoples. To the European, one Japanese is as like another Japanese as one sheep is like another

sheep; but to the European, even in the first hours of his arrival on Indian soil, the inhabitants stand out from each other with a difference as complete as that which separates horses from dogs, or thrushes from chaffinches. The earliest impression is made by the strange paint marks on the foreheads of these peoples. He sees men with three white bars across the brow, like a hurdle; others with two upright strokes of white running up to the hair; others with two similar upright strokes of white, but divided by a significant line of vermilion; others with foreheads plastered all over with grey ash; and still others with a spot of scarlet between the eyebrows, like a holly-berry or a particularly jovial wart. In naked savages these marks would appear natural or seemly; but on the foreheads of serious gentlemen in European clothes or venerable, benign and bearded Father Abrahams in noble turbans and robes of apostolic grandeur, they have a most bizarre and disturbing effect. Soon, however, the eyes get accustomed to these caste marks, these religious or social symbols which shout to the beholder, 'I am a fine fellow,' or 'I believe in such a god.' After the first shock of amused surprise, undistracted and undisgusted, the gaze settles itself to observe in the people their mould of features and the play of their expressions.

As various as the shades of their colouring, which move from a sad yellow through every hue of brown up to an ebonized black, are the features and expressions of the Indian peoples. One man is noble and kingly, like a Roman Emperor or an English judge; another is as Mongolian as a Chinaman; a third as hook-nosed, crafty, and dislikable as Shylock; a fourth as beautiful as Moses or Elijah; a fifth as bulbous-featured as a carica-

ture; a sixth absolutely as negroid and animal as a South African savage; a seventh like Flaxman's drawing of the grizzled Ulysses leaning on his staff; an eighth majestical and superb, like one's imagined Akbar; a ninth like the low-foreheaded mummies of the Pharaohs; a tenth, heavy, plethoric, sad-eyed, tall-browed and thick-bearded like the late Lord Salisbury; an eleventh like a Red Indian; a twelfth like one of Mr. Reed's prehistoric men; and a thirteenth close-lipped, self-consequential, and stern like a County Councillor or an esteemed member of a London Vestry.

There is not this remarkable and complete difference among the women. The suppressed and trivial life forced upon them by tradition probably accounts for an uninteresting sameness affecting both Hindus and Muhamadans. The men, on the other hand, with three hundred million gods to choose from, furiously interested in the incessant strife of their contending religions and the incessant feud of their innumerable politics, and with the business of money-getting and money-hoarding always occupying their unsleeping brains, live more in the world, and are marked by all the passions of the market-place and all the jealousies and superstitions of the temple. It is, indeed, impossible to exaggerate the impression made upon a quiet and observing mind by this wonderful facial diversity of the Indian peoples, a diversity which is not merely spread over the vast extent of India's geography, but which may be seen in a single street in Bombay in the course of half-an-hour's walk.

In the dusty and heavy-smelling bazaars, which are narrow streets composed of dolls'-house-looking buildings of painted boards, with shutters to the upper windows, and open shops on the ground floor

rather bigger than rabbit-hutches and raised two or three feet from the gutter on stumps of wood—in the bazaars, these thronging figures talking in the road, entering mosque or temple, sitting cross-legged in the shops, or sharing a hookah on a balcony, appear natural and congruous in spite of their conflicting variety. But you cannot imagine unless you have seen it, what a strange effect is produced by this immense diversity of race and raiment in those modern parts of an Indian city where the stone buildings are magnificent, where motor-cars glide in and out of gong-sounding electric trams, and shopkeepers exhibit in fine windows all the comforts and inventions of European luxury. Long-robed figures like Levitical priests pass slowly in front of these commercial windows, an electric tram crowded with turbans and dhoties goes swinging round the corner of a huge hotel; a string of little carts filled with cotton and drawn by tiny white bullocks, the tail-twisting and stick-flourishing drivers sitting on the pole, goes bumping over the cobbles, past the showrooms of a French milliner; under a banyan tree outside the great office of an electrical engineer, the barber, sitting on his haunches, is shaving the bowed head of a crouching Hindu; sitting on the kerb, resting her back against the standard of an electric light, a woman—oblivious to all the world—is searching the head of her daughter for undesirable lodgers; in the shadow of a garage filled with snorting cars and perspiring chauffeurs, the ear doctor is consumedly engaged with iron instruments down the burrow of a boy's ear; and the dirty, round-shouldered, cigarette-smoking gharry-wallah, sitting cross-legged on the box of his little rubber-tyred Victoria, is one man; the half-naked Hindu, beating his oxen, on a water-cart, is another man; the benign

and whiskered Parsi money-lender, under his white silk umbrella is another man; the Goanese servant in spotless white linen carrying a bouquet of flowers to his mistress is another man; the policeman in flat, yellow cap, blue tunic, and blue breeches ending in bare calves is another man; and so on, all the way through these splendid streets and beautiful avenues —every other man different and interesting, every face telling a different story of religion and custom, and every shadow on the dazzling stones falling from a different road and a different journey.

It is almost uncanny to walk alone through the streets of an Indian city at night. The bare feet of the people make it seem as though the grave had given up its sheeted dead; they pass one without sound, they flit by one as noiselessly as moths, they start up out of dark places or come round street corners with a silence that almost takes away the breath. And later in the night, if the traveller penetrates to the quiet native streets, he finds the pavements, the doorways, the staircases, and the corridors strewn with white-robed figures sleeping with the stillness and the quiet of the dead, while from some window above sounds the monotonous drone of the tom-tom and the nasal wail of a nautch girl. An Indian can sit for an hour on his haunches, only the feet touching the ground; and he can sleep as comfortably on the bare stones of the pavement outside his house as any European can sleep on a spring-mattress.

One has to remind oneself again and again that these interesting and delightful people not only differ violently from each other in the matter of religion and in the habits of social life, but that they are all absolutely and perfectly different from us in the whole range of intellectual outlook. It is

natural to suppose when passing a British-looking gentleman in a more or less European suit of clothes or in buying a box of cigarettes from a charming old man who puts one in mind of some Biblical hero, that however greatly his complexion may differ from one's own, however unusual his costume would appear in Paris or London, however crimson his teeth may be with the chewing of betel, that the premises of his philosophy, the postulates of his science of life, are very much the same as one's own. But, insularity is a sad blunderer. This polite and even jest-making Hindu believes that the world is flat; his god is a mixture of Bacchus, Don Juan, and Dick Turpin; he would no more be seen walking side by side with his wife than killing a cow; he would no more sit down to meals with his wife and daughters than he would say his prayers in a mosque; he regards science as an absurd delusion; he considers that women have no souls to speak of; and as for your honoured, superior, and complacent self he holds in his heart that you are filthy in your habits, mad in your ideas, and loathsome to the gods.

I found myself saying very often as I walked in the wide and magnificent streets of Indian cities, 'All these people believe that the world is flat.' The phrase repeated itself involuntarily, until my mind seized the full significance of its monotony. They inhabit a different world from ours. We buy and sell with them, we laugh and talk together, we are as good friends as they will let us be, and we are never likely seriously to fall out and come to a bloody rupture—but, the thoughts of their hearts are not our thoughts, the aspiration of their souls is not our aspiration, and in everything which makes man a rational creature different from all the

animal creation they are as separate and distinct from us as the earth from the moon.

Here, I think, is one aspect of India's romance. The peoples, separated among themselves into over two thousand species of mankind, are so separated from us that they are like inhabitants of another world. They have a different morality and a different geography. They are so constituted that they can conceive of a god, and even worship him, who violates every canon of their own moral code and would seem a frightful monster to the London hooligan. They think of disease and drought and dreams in a manner laughable to the youngest schoolboy. They have no knowledge of the globe, no interest in the discoveries of science, and no respect for the inventions of civilization. They shrink from taking life, and yet they will let a dog die of starvation before their eyes, or contemplate unmoved the agony of a wounded ox. They go to our surgeons and doctors, make use of our telegraph and telephone, but the Jains among them will pay a man to sleep in the bed they are leaving for a few nights, so that the fleas and bugs may not perish of starvation. And these three hundred millions of people, inhabiting so different a universe from ours, are controlled in their political destiny by a mere handful of Englishmen; their rivers are being harnessed by English engineers, their woods conserved and developed by English foresters, their deserts improved into thriving fields by English agriculturists, their mines ransacked for gold and coal by the same quiet and relentless power, and even the serenity of their blue sky is now being clouded by the factory smoke of these same islanders from the West. Firm and immovable as they appear to stand in their immemorial beliefs, these three

hundred millions of human beings are silently and imperceptibly altering the texture of their minds and comprehending a new significance in life. The man who ascends with you in the lift of an hotel and tells you that the world is flat, has a son who is reading Herbert Spencer; and even though the son may still believe in Krishna and smother himself in simulated blood on the obscene and disgusting festival of Holi, he studies John Stuart Mill and ranks himself a synthetical philosopher.

Consider the romance of this British governance. In the direct civil government of the two hundred and thirty millions of British India and in the partial supervision and advisory assistance of the seventy millions in Native States, only twelve hundred Englishmen are employed, including military officers attached to the civil arm. From a little inconspicuous island in the northern seas, twelve hundred men bred in a different religion, speaking a different language, and holding an entirely different theory of the universe, master and dominate the destiny of three hundred alien millions—master and dominate that destiny for the good of the three hundred millions and for the peace and security of the whole world.

There are two secrets for this romantic state of affairs. First, the quality of the Sahib—a man who must never lie, never take bribes, and never 'let down' a friend; and second, the invisible Fleet of England, which preserves India from the greed and rapacity of the marauder. It is in the inviolate security assured by the British Navy that the handful of Englishmen domiciled in India do their work and keep the peace; and those sensational and tiresome people who are for ever telling us that we shall assuredly lose India, forget that so long as the

British Navy holds the sea it is just as impossible for England to lose India as for the same little country to lose the county of Rutland.

To an extent greater than the average Englishman knows, India is a self-governing country. Next in importance to the 864 Civil charges, which are mostly held by members of the Indian Civil Service, including Indians, the next 3,700 superior judicial and executive appointments are all held by Indians, with about 100 exceptions. Nearly every subordinate position is held by Indians.

In the case of the Cities, there are 742 municipalities controlled by 9,800 representatives, of whom half are elected by the people and the other half selected by Government from amongst the wisest and most intelligent of India's philanthropic and public-spirited men of affairs. The Rural Population is similarly controlled by 1,073 Districts and Local Boards, on which 15,800 of India's leaders serve, half by election and half by selection.

These few figures, wonderfully eloquent of British methods and the confidence guaranteed by the British Navy, effectually sweep away the foolish contention of harebrained sentimentalists that India is a country living under the tyranny of an alien Government. The twelve hundred Englishmen in India are working in association with the sanest Indian intellects for the glory and power, the happiness and prosperity, the peace and order of India herself; and if in single particulars they appear to run counter to Indian demands it is only because the granting of those demands, in their honest and considered judgment, would weaken the connection with England and so imperil the absolute peace guaranteed by the British Navy, which is essential to the evolution of India's destiny.

Picture to yourself what would happen if we withdrew from India. First, the Parsis would flee for their lives, carrying I know not how much wealth and intelligence out of the country. Then the Muhamadans would attempt to settle by musket and knife those furious sectarian differences which resulted in bloodshed during the last Mohurrum. Hindus would seize the opportunity to fall upon the hated Mussulman; Rajah would march against Rajah; like a flooding sea the long-knifed heathen of the hills would descend upon the plains; and the navies of European and Asiatic powers, eager for the rich fruit of Indian prosperity, would appear at different parts of the coast and proceed to annex all that they could hold of India's soil. The miracle of a single India, only brought into existence by the genius of England, and only possible so long as the British Navy holds the sea, would disappear, and once again, as it was in the beginning, the continent of India would be split up into a hundred warring and discordant countries

These people, whose destiny has come into our hands by the providence of God, are children, and like the Children of Israel they are on a great march from servitude to freedom, from darkness to light, from ignorance to knowledge. To set such a wicked and crazy person as the 'patriot' Tilak at their head, who has not only inspired the murder of noble men, but has actually justified murder as a holy thing, is an outrage.* To inflame them with the speeches recently made by a certain English Socialist travelling through the country, is a crime. Even to

* 'The Divine Krishna teaching in the Gita tells us we may kill even our teachers and our kinsmen. . . . Rise above the Penal Code into the rarefied atmosphere of the sacred Bhaghavad Gita and consider the action of great men.' Tilak was here speaking with enthusiasm of the Mahratta leader Shivaji, who persuaded the

permit a European woman to make Benares the headquarters for a theosophical propaganda, which may possibly have as disastrous results for the British Raj as for the evolution of Christianity in India, is a hazardous experiment in *laissez-faire*. These are not only the views of the best Englishmen in India; they are the opinions of the best Indians themselves.

It would be much better, able and responsible men assure me, if England made her whole mind on this subject quite clear to the Children of India. She should acknowledge by the mouth of the King-Emperor that the ideal of Indian Self-Government is a just and honourable aspiration, and she should declare her willingness to further this worthy movement in every way consonant with law and order; but in most emphatic language, and in every part of the country, and on every possible occasion, she should point out that such a consummation is only possible while India's internal peace is secured by the British Navy (to which India makes no contribution whatever), and announce her unwavering determination to destroy any influence at work which is in the least degree likely to corrupt the authority of the central Government or weaken the connection between the two countries. And what she threatens to do, she should do. A wise statesman would as mercifully remove such creatures as Tilak, who dare to justify murder, as a man of science would remove a malignant growth from the human body. And India would respect such action. 'There are three

Muhamadan General, Afzul Khan, 'to meet him in peaceful conference half-way between the contending armies, and, as he bent down to greet his guest, plunged into his bowels the famous "tiger's claw," a hooked gauntlet of steel, while a Mahratta force sprang out of ambush and cut the Muhamadan army in pieces.'—Quoted in *Indian Unrest*, by Valentine Chirol.

talkers in India,' an able member of the Civil Service told me; 'the man with a just grievance—whose grievance should be removed: the man who talks for the sake of talking—and who may be left talking: and the man openly bent on overthrowing the British tutelage—who should be hanged.'

Let it be always borne in mind that the intelligent Indians are less than a handful in comparison with the millions who can neither read nor write, and that there are literally millions, surrounding the virtuous peoples of India, who practise as a quite ordinary matter immoralities which would bring them into the criminal courts of Europe. The ignorance of some of the millions of India, as this book will show, is something so incredible that it is difficult to think of them as human beings. And the immoralities of many of them are so horrible and revolting that it is almost possible to think of them as the creation of infernal power.

But the true designation for these people, the very worst of whom are docile and charming, is that of this chapter's heading. They are children. One must not think of them as grown men nor judge them by a single European standard. They are different from us in almost every particular that makes man an intellectual being. Like children they consult the stars, listen to the wind, regard the lightning, and watch disease spreading death through their midst. Like children, they believe the most fantastic stories of gods and demons. Like children they accept without question or demur anything told to them with the least semblance of authority. And like children they are afraid of the dark, and in all that they attempt to achieve fear the frustrating enmity of malicious devils.

Does it not help one to realize the true state and

condition of these children, to know that seventy millions of them—think what these figures mean—seventy millions of them accept without the smallest spirit of rebellion the unwritten law which makes them for the whole of their lives outcasts and helots? These seventy millions know themselves to be an abomination and a horror to the castes above them. Without suspicion they allow themselves to be exploited by the very people who say they are 'untouchable,' and whose food would be polluted and uneatable if even their shadow fell upon it. In every village there is an outcasts' quarter, separated from the other castes. No Brahman priest will come near them, sick or dying. No caste postman will give their letters into their hands. No caste doctor will attend them in illness. They have to fashion their own gods and create their own priesthood—a 'black' priesthood which is regarded with unutterable loathing by the holy priest in the sacred temple. And they do not question or rebel. Because they are the sons of their fathers, they are what they are, and thus they must remain, 'untouchable,' to the day of their death.

Remember always that the cities of India are mere potting-sheds and greenhouses in the midst of an enormous garden. Something like ninety per cent of the population live on or by the land, and these 270 rural millions out of a rough total of 300 millions, are as illiterate and superstitious, however charming in manner, as any savages in the remotest darkness of Africa. I do not mean for a moment that they are repellent and hideous; more polite and engaging people I have never met, more gracious and hospitable people do not exist among the finest peasantry of Europe—but their ignorance and their superstition and many of their habits are as barbarous as

anything to be found among the most savage heathen.

What is the root of this barbarism, extant in the twentieth century and living cheek by jowl with the civilization of England?

'Where women are honoured,' says an ancient seer, 'the Divinities are complacent; where they are despised it is useless to pray to God.'

There are two interpretations of the monition—*Cherchez la femme.*

In spite of the publicity given by English newspapers to the revolutionary ideas of the 'new woman,' and in spite of plays and novels which might make one think domestic happiness nowhere existed, everybody knows who has gone about the country at all that the centre of English life is the home and that the centre of the home is the Mother. It is against the Englishwoman's lofty and calm conception of Motherhood, and not against man's amused indifference, or his irritable disgust, that such a violent wave as the Suffragette movement, which must be distinguished from the Woman Question, breaks itself into the spume of failure and the froth of defeat. To be the mother of strong sons and beautiful daughters is still the supreme ambition of the Englishwoman. And the home, with all its innocent pleasures and delightful ambitions, is still the fixed and steadfast centre of our national righteousness.

Nothing of this sort is known in India. Nothing in the least degree approximating to the ideal of English motherhood is known among the peoples of India. A woman may indeed be a veritable termagant and make the life of her husband a scarce endurable martyrdom, but she is never his companion and friend, and never the moral providence

and spiritual counsellor of his children. She cooks her husband's meal, but may not eat till he has finished; she goes out to work in the fields with her husband, but may not walk at his side. You will see women in India loading an engine with coal, making bricks in the brick-fields, laying stones on the road, bearing hods of mortar up the scaffolding of a new building, and sweeping up the manure of the street, or carrying the European pail to the cess-pit; but you will never see a woman going arm-in-arm with her husband to a concert or festivity, or playing games with her sons. You will never see a happy and rejoicing mother, the pride of her husband, the joy of her children, and the supreme influence for character and prosperity in the home.

And yet, by the irony of fate, infinitely the most beautiful building in India, perhaps in the whole world, is that ivory-coloured tomb of loveliness dreaming in a green garden on the banks of the Jumna, whose slender minarets and lofty dome, whose pierced and carven marbles and inlaid walls of precious stones are raised as the memorial of a man's love for a woman. And not, as some people are disposed to think, as the passionate sacrament of a lover for his mistress, of some Antony for his Cleopatra, but as the enduring and solemn reverence of a husband for as virtuous and homely a matron as ever brought fourteen children into life and died in childbed. Such is the Taj Mahal—a witness to a man's love for his matronal wife, and it stands in a country where men and women neither walk together nor eat together, and where the woman is degraded to the most menial and bestial of toils.

Surely the great march on which the Children of

India have set out must be swift or slow, victorious or disastrous, according to the place in it assigned to women. As my book will show, the religion of the West has a most helpful and emancipating effect on Indian women, and it seems to me almost the clearest thing in the difficult destiny of India that the ultimate salvation of the country lies with a higher and nobler domesticity created by women conscious of a righteous God and a pure heaven. To look into the bright eyes and smiling face of an Indian woman converted to Christianity is to feel full of a glad confidence in India's future, and to realize the supremacy of Christianity as a force in human evolution. How different are one's feelings on beholding the most tragic figure in the whole world—an Indian old woman, shrivelled and wrinkled to the bone, dragging weary feet through the dust, frowning at the sun out of watery eyes, and muttering to herself an inarticulate Miserere as she draws nearer to the hovel where no one is watching for her return, no one will give her welcome, and where in the darkness of a corner she will eat her morsel of rice and fall asleep ignored by all the rest of the household.

For a woman to survive her husband in India, it is purgatory; but to grow old in her widowhood —it is hell. The Indian widow is not permitted to re-marry. How must it be then, with such a country, possessing 27,000,000 widows, 6,000,000 of them under fourteen years of age, and 14,000 of them under four? In zenanas, according to a Government Census, there are 40,000,000 women.*

Fundamental to this chief question of the Woman, is the question of Religion. Everything in India is what it is because of Religion. The problem of

* See page 340

what is called 'Indian Unrest,' as Mr. Valentine Chirol shows in his conclusive book on the subject, is at the bottom a religious question. The position of women is the ordinance of religion. And truly it is the same with everything else in India from one end of the country to the other. Until the religions of India are thrown by the peasant as well as the Babu, to the waste-heap of humanity's childishness, until their gods and goddesses, their devils and their demons, become the stock-in-trade of the satirist and the clown, no real movement can be made from darkness to light, and no pulse of joy and enthusiasm beat from the heart of her various humanity. And it is because this conviction is to me so obvious and certain, that one is almost tempted to regard as more serious than the propaganda of unquiet politicians, that corner-creeping and unconscious treason of theosophy which is exalting Indian philosophy above our pure religion breathing household laws, and is, consciously or unconsciously, encouraging the easily-conceited intellect of India to regard the peoples of Europe as benighted savages and brutal fools. Let us make no mistake in this matter. India without a religion is an impossible conception. India with her present religion is ceasing to exist. What is the religion we have to give her? and how far can the Government, without departing from its traditional attitude of impartial overlord, safeguard her from false religions undermining all authority and corrupting every fibre of the moral being?

What is the true drama of Modern India?—it is the collision of Christianity and Brahmanism, the conflict of two differing souls, the struggle between a spiritual materialism and a material spiritualism.

India, with her immemorial antipathy to the fierce clangour and unsleeping energy of materialism, is feeling in every vein of her body the beat and pulse of a materialism as eager and confident and elated as the spirit of adventure; and this alien materialism, whatever the particular forms of its religious creed, is shot and saturated in all the warp and woof of its being with the morality of Christianity and the spiritual hauntings of Christ. However ugly and however selfish and brutal it may seem, the materialism of Europe is spiritual in its attitude towards the universe, if only by the long and ineradicable heredity of Christian influence. It cannot out-think its centuries of Christianity. On the other hand, the spiritualism of India, which has long ago departed from the beautiful dreamings and baseless metaphysics of the Vedas, is the most material and childishly superstitious animalism that ever masqueraded as idealism.

In the shock and impact of these two souls, the soul of Christianity and the soul of Hinduism, the soul of Europe and the soul of Asia, one beholds the modern drama of India.

To understand the least thing about India you must understand the religion of Hinduism. And truly to perceive the immense problem of the future, a future concerning all the world, for India is the heart of the East, you must study the subtle and leavening effect of Christianity upon Hinduism, of Christian materialism upon pagan spiritualism.

Two forces are wrestling in India for a mastery which must ultimately affect all mankind. Outwardly, the sense of conflict is not apparent, and to a superficial observer it would seem that India

is pursuing her own and ancient road utterly oblivious to the soul of Europe; but inwardly there is being waged as stern and fierce a contest as ever heaved the world to this side and to that, and it is not the bodies of nations that are at grips, but the soul and inward mystery of humanity—the spirit of the East at enmity with the spirit of the West, and the soul of Darkness with the soul of Light.

THE TEMPLE OF TERROR

One of the greatest delusions of modern Europe is the hazy notion, born of Sir Edwin Arnold's poetry, Madame Blavatsky's conjuring tricks, and Mrs. Besant's whimsical theosophy, that the East is spiritually superior to the West. There are good and well-intentioned people both in Europe and America who genuinely believe that the religion of Christianity is actually crude, inferior, and trivial in comparison with some mythical and entirely non-existent religious occultism guarded by the mysterious holy men of India. There is a still more numerous host among the white races which holds with a most sloven and treasonable ignorance which it regards as a pleasing form of cosmopolitan tolerance, that Christianity is only one of many religions all very much alike and all more or less similar in their service to humanity.

The truth is that an honest man who travels through India even with the most casual observation and the least effort to discover the fact of things, finds himself, must find himself, again and again, bowing himself in spirit with a new adoration in his soul and a fresh understanding in his mind, before the majestic beauty and incomparable sublimity of the Divine Christ. If, after my long journeys through India, one feeling is stronger in

my mind than any other, if one illumination burns in my soul more luminously and more steadily than another, if one conviction is paramount and sovran above all others, it is that Christ stands in the history of mankind absolutely alone and unchallengeably supreme as the Light of the World. And this conviction rests not only upon the sinless life and exquisite words of the Master, nor upon the civilizing work accomplished by Christianity in Europe, but upon the realization brought home to my soul by the condition of modern India as to the great miracle of Christ's personal victory over the Brahmanism and racial superstitions of His own day.

Exactly what the Brahmans are to modern India, the Scribes and Pharisees were to Palestine. And while Christ by the influence of His Character and the magic of His Personality easily overthrew those Scribes and Pharisees and sent His gracious teaching to the ends of the earth, all the Missions in India, protected by the dominant power and supported by the well-nigh inexhaustible wealth of civilized nations, fling themselves in vain against this rock of traditional Brahmanism.

It is well that the truth should be known. Among the educated and upper classes of India, Christianity can claim but few triumphs. There are no *direct* conversions worth speaking about except among the lowest and the most depressed classes, where Christianity is moving to amazing victory. The *indirect* effects of Christianity, presently to be considered, are pervading the whole fabric of Indian national life—an immense, a wonderful achievement—but there are no direct effects worth mention, no winning of disciples and no real catalogue of conversions among the Brahmans and the castes immediately sharing in the power and plunder of Brahmanism.

Against the good and reforming Buddha, Brahmanism stood firm; the little body of Jains, with their quite farcical humanitarianism, only witness to the failure of yet another effort at reformation. Muhamadanism,* which is a pure and lofty religion in comparison with Hinduism, has had no cleansing and no uplifting effect upon Brahmanism; the Parsi worship of nature has not touched the outermost fringe of Brahmanism; and, after centuries of missionary labour, Brahmanism remains adamant and unconquered before the hosts of Christendom. Brahmanism is now apprehensive, is even angrily alarmed and violently afraid of Christianity; but not at all because it foresees the conversion of India—only because it dreads the indirect effects of Christianity upon caste and upon its own tyrannical power over the people.

All the unrest in India which is treacherous, unscrupulous, and bloody-handed comes from the Brahmans, and its inspiration is *the alarm felt by Brahmanism at the increasing conversions to Christianity among the outcasts, and the extraordinary progress of Christian ideas among the Indian peoples in general.* But Brahmanism itself is utterly untouched by the spirit of Christ. If it is moving at all in the direction of Christianity, it is moving under the cover of darkness and is armed with the weapon of the assassin. Christianity, and not England, is the supreme enemy of Brahmanism, as Christ, and not Rome, was the supreme enemy of the Scribes and Pharisees.

It is well that the reader should acquaint himself with the true nature of Hinduism, and see exactly

* The two foundational pillars of Muhamadanism—the worship of One God, and the abomination of idolatry—offer an invitation to Christianity which will surely one day lead to great events. But this is a subject to be considered elsewhere.

what it is that Brahmanism sets itself to guard. Let him banish from his mind any idea that there is something mysterious and wonderful in the Eastern religion. Let him rest assured that the Indian theosophy which makes converts of queer people in Europe and America, is something of which 99,999 persons out of every 100,000 in India would not understand a single word. And let him know for a certainty that all the magic and marvels of Madame Blavatsky were revealed by the Society for Psychical Research, which sent a trained inquirer to India, as tricks and cheatings of a very trivial character.

What, in sober truth, is the chief religion of India, known under the including name of Hinduism? Sir Monier Williams has put it in a single phrase—it is a *mental disease*. 'The great majority of the inhabitants of India,' he says, 'are from the cradle to the burning ground, victims of a form of mental disease which is best expressed by the term demonophobia. They are haunted and oppressed by a perpetual dread of demons. They are firmly convinced that evil spirits of all kinds, from malignant fiends to merely mischievous imps and elves, are ever on the watch to harm, harass, and torment them, to cause plague, sickness, famine and disaster, to impede, injure, and mar every good work.'

Terror is the spirit of Hinduism. Fear is the tyrant of the Hindu. His humanitarianism, with which Europe is often reproached by vegetarian theosophists, has nothing whatever to do with kindness towards animals, but is entirely inspired by fear of offending some god or demon, or of destroying the reincarnating soul of a hero or a friend. Always he is afraid. I have talked to devil-dancers, to low-caste and to high-caste Hindus

throughout India, and in all cases I have found that fundamental in their mind to every concept of the universe and every apprehension of the spirit world, is a vital and ineradicable terror. Convert a devil-dancer, make him quite sure that God is Love and that Christ has saved him from perdition, and still you will find him haunted by the fear that Satan is never absent from his side waiting to seize and destroy him on the smallest opportunity. That is ever his master-thought. Always to the Hindu there is a giant menace overspreading the firmament and darkening the earth with the shadow of an implacable hostility. It is far easier for him to conceive of three hundred million wicked gods, than to believe in one God absolutely pure, absolutely kind, and absolutely good. His experience of life justifies the one theory and denies the other. Existence for him is not the gift of a loving Father, but a cruel and hazardous martyrdom created by malignant devils. Pain and disease strike at him from the air and from the ground; famine descends upon his laboured fields with a blast of destroying hate; he cries to the gods for rain—and the only answer to his cry is an earth of iron and a sky of brass; in the midst of rains that beat his crops to earth, he beseeches demon or god for mercy, and the answer comes in a flood that sweeps away his hut and drowns his cattle; never for him is life a gift of love shining with the testimony of divine beneficence.

'Why do you pray to a devil?' I asked a venerable Hindu in Southern India. 'Sahib,' he replied, 'why should I pray to a God who is good?'

It is with them the clearest logic in the world that prayer to a benign and loving Heaven-Father must either be superfluous or of the nature of insult;

whereas, surely it is most just and reasonable that poor and defenceless humanity should kneel and humble itself before those black and awful powers which afflict it with a chastisement utterly unthinkable from a God of Love.

Here lies the mightiest blunder of Christian missionaries. To a people in whom this conviction is fixed and steadfast, they have presented the idea of a good God who is the author of all their mischief, and whose mercy can only be procured by abasement and supplication. They have not taught —of course, I speak generally—that suffering is largely the merciful process of education following the infringement of natural laws set in motion for the good and profit of mankind; nor that prayer is an aspiration of the immortal soul seeking communion with its Maker, not a request for benefits and advantages. They have attempted to teach the Indian what it is impossible for a rational man to believe or for an honest man to prove—that a Creator who is perfect goodness and perfect love requires to be moved by prayer before He will act with ordinary kindness towards His creatures: and that prayer to such a God, faithfully prayed, will do away with all the distresses of humanity. And the Indian, listening to such a missionary, sees stronger and hardier men of the white race building canals against famine, draining the land against flood, and using the science of medicine against plague and fever—not praying to their good God for the prevention of these calamities. What does he conclude? If prayer will suffice, why all this labour and activity? And if labour and activity are necessary, why pray? To him it seems infinitely simpler and obviously more logical to follow the long tradition of his fathers—to placate by every

means in his power the evil forces in the universe, and certainly to risk no fear of displeasing the good gods by presuming to tell them what they should do with the world.

A reasonable and explicating Theism, the true Theism of a true Christianity, is not only opposed by a superstitious and traditional Hinduism, but also by the misrepresentations of Christianity deep-rooted in the Indian mind by the unconscious blasphemies of Deism. The Indian still thinks that our religion implies a God who made the world and blundered it: who, having made it, repented of His work and left the Devil to do with it what he would: and who afterwards incarnated Himself for a few years and failed to overcome the power of His adversary. It is most difficult to make the average Indian mind conceive of a God now and always associated with humanity, a Creator who is still creating, a Light that is still shining, and an Energy that is still redeeming and uplifting.

A young Hindu educated at Oxford said to me on this subject—'If the missionaries had talked to us more of salvation and less of damnation, Christianity would have made real progress among our educated people long before now.'

Think what it must be for these people, schooled to believe that suffering proceeds from a wicked and hostile force, to be told that a good God is the author of their damnation.

This is really what the teaching of the missionaries —a teaching, of course, absolutely at variance with the goodness of Christianity—has implanted in the Indian mind. They have not said, 'If you believe you will be saved,' but, 'If you do not believe you will be damned.' Their God is the Hindu's Devil.

Different, vastly different, is the method of Fakir Singh; and to the hopeful and persuasive tone of its teaching as much as to the earnestness, humility, and native simplicity of its teachers, I attribute the extraordinary success of the Salvation Army in India. Here, as showing the true method of Christian propaganda, I will describe a colloquy of Fakir Singh with one of the many Nicodemuses among the modern Indians.

Picture to yourself the scene. Under a tree, close to a well where women are drawing water and labourers are driving their oxen to the trough, sits the Salvationist in native dress talking to a little company of turbaned figures about the Good Shepherd and the way of liberation. The sun sets behind a grove of palm trees, the strange scent of an Eastern night begins to breathe from the warm dust, the soft sky grows gradually pervaded with pale and trembling stars, out of the distant jungle, lifting its tall trees and spreading bushes to the violet hills, come the vespers of birds, the ravening cry of beasts of prey, and the sigh of night. The last woman leaves the well with a brazen vessel balanced on her head and another steadied against her hip. The labourers are driving their cattle back to the shelter of the village. A shadow falls between heaven and the earth. A crescent moon appears above a cluster of bamboos. The little company of turbaned figures rises from the ground, and with homely courtesy and a genuine kindness of heart, each man salaams to the Fakir. One remains behind.

'Guru,' he says, when the others have passed out of hearing, 'I am a man who does harm to no one, and good to those who are in sorrow or distress; do I need your Christ to save me from damnation?'

'How is that possible?' answers the Fakir.

'Christ did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.'

'Ah! that is what one can understand.'

'He came to heal those who have no physician.'

'That is what I wanted to hear.'

'He is a seeker of lost sheep. Those who have a shepherd do not require Him.'

'Then, as I am a good man, and as I need no physician, and as I have a shepherd in my own religion, why should you tell me about Christ?'

'In case you are not quite certain that you are good, and that you need no physician.'

'Well, no man is perfectly good.'

'That is true, O brother.'

'A man is a man; he is prone to evil.'

'You have wisdom.'

'But, tell me, what do you mean by sin?'

'I mean the knowledge of the heart that it is unhappy and disquieted; the feeling of the soul that it is not at peace with God; the thought, O my brother, the thought of the conscience that death may have a fear and a hazard for the spirit.'

'Well, but if a man follows his religion?'

'That is not enough. Nay! that is surely not enough.'

'Guru, he does the best he can.'

'But it does not give him peace.'

'Yes, but how should he know that another religion will give him peace? That is the heart of this business! How should he know?'

'Brother, he must try for himself. If you are ill, and you send for a doctor who makes you no better, do you not send for another, and yet another, until you discover one whose medicine gives you strength and whose care restores you to the joy of health? Brother, the soul is sick as well as the body; there

are soul doctors as well as body doctors. My religion says that it can take away the unrest of the heart and give peace to the soul—the peace of God which passes all understanding. Does your religion make such a promise? If it does, and if after long trial you have found that your heart is still disquieted and your soul is yet full of unrest, is it not wise, for the peace of your own heart and for the health of your own soul, that you should make trial of another religion? I do not ask you to try my religion if your heart is at peace with God and you can contemplate the hour of your death without dismay. But if your heart is unhappy with a sense of guilt, if your conscience will not let you rest, and if your soul is afraid of death, then I invite you to make trial of my religion. And I ask you, because I, too, was unhappy and full of unrest until I bowed myself before the Light of the World and followed the Way, the Truth, and the Life.'

In every religion of the East there is a door always standing open through which the true disciple of the Way can enter and win companions for his soul. It is the door of the human heart. Troubled and unhappy is the heart of India. The banks of the sacred rivers are thick with pilgrims seeking peace of mind and rest of soul. The shrines are congregated with human weariness and spiritual disquiet. The relics of saints are reverenced and besought for a peace of heart wistfully desired. For a surety of soul dimly imagined, the temples are filled with kneelers and the worn rosaries turned in ceaseless prayer. The religions of the East endure because they have failed.

To go as a theologian to these hungering and thirsting millions and to dogmatize about the origin of evil and the nature of Christ, is but to anger and

confuse them. They are seekers of peace. It is not a definition that they desire, but rest of heart and quiet of soul. They need, not a pedagogue, but a physician: a good shepherd, not a casuist.

The supreme weakness of Hinduism is its utter incapacity to satisfy the human heart. And this impotence arises from the absence of a moral code. Christianity insists upon a cleansed heart. Hinduism asks only for a surrender of the reason. Hinduism attributes all the ills of humanity to the circumference of the universe. Christianity points to the human centre, the heart of man. The Hindu gods are wicked and abominable, prostitution is a means of financing many of the temples, a man may consider himself a good and pious disciple of his faith who lies, steals, and violates the law of sex—there is no insistence whatever on the supreme need for a cleansed heart. 'He who pronounces Durga,' says one authority, 'though he constantly practises adultery, plunders others of their property, or commits the most heinous crimes, is freed from all sins.' Indeed, sin, in the true sense, scarcely exists in the conception of Hinduism. Ask a man how it is that he worships as a god one who is immoral and iniquitous and he will reply, with a smile for your ignorance, that surely a god may do what he likes. *Samarthi ko dosh nahin*—the Mighty may do what they please. 'The duties of life,' says Bishop Caldwell, 'are never inculcated in any Hindu temple. The discharge of those duties is never represented as enjoined by the gods, nor are any prayers ever offered in any temple for help to enable the worshippers to discharge those duties aright. . . . We meet with a moral Hindu who has broken altogether away from religion; and what is still more common, yet still more extraordinary, we

meet with a devout Hindu who lives a flagrantly immoral life. In the latter case, no person sees any inconsistency between the immorality and the devoutness.' It is absolute truth that spirituality in their imagination is a state of being in which a man may do whatever he pleases without the fear of any evil consequences. For a man who can say '*Aham Brahma*—I am God,' there exists neither good nor evil. Sin, which Christianity declares to be the source of all disquiet and unrest, for Hinduism is only a serious matter where it exists as part of a general attachment to earth life in the heart of a man not yet covetous of annihilation. The peace sought by India is the peace of non-existence.

In a few sentences it is possible to express quite truthfully and without any danger of omission or misrepresentation the religion of the vast majority of the Hindu peoples. They believe that life must always be accompanied by misery: that deliverance from individual existence can only be attained by the cessation of all desires—good or bad: that man is surrounded by malignant forces hostile to his happiness: and that the gods and goddesses, who are altogether indifferent to Conduct, are to be cajoled and even threatened into affording protection or bestowing material prosperity.

The first object of a Hindu's life is to beget sons, in order that his journey through hell, after the miseries of this earthly life, may be shortened by the sacrifices of male heirs. Until he is the father of sons, the Hindu considers that he walks the earth in the very greatest peril of soul. So soon as he can boast of sons (daughters are of no avail in the business), he can take his religion more easily, and propitiatory sacrifices to the gods are varied among the low castes by thrashings and

spittings and curses when these idols fail to avert disaster or prosper an undertaking. Nevertheless, the Hindu is always in a state of some uncertainty about his soul, not on account of his sins, but because he fears reincarnations of pain and horror, and stands in awe of gods as capricious and vague in their requirements of humanity as they are cruel, revengeful and iniquitous. Hinduism is a weltering chaos of terror, darkness, and uncertainty. It is a religion without the apprehension of a moral evolution, without definite commandments, and without a God.

I have asked many of the humblest Indians in various parts of the country what they understand by evil, and the answer was always the same. Evil consists in conduct punished by the Government. They acknowledge the difference between right and wrong, but it is impossible to make them realize anything approaching to the nature of a religious sanction in the sphere of morals. For them religion is mainly a life-long effort to placate the demons who afflict them, and—among the more spiritual—an agony of soul to reach that dehumanized condition of mind in which the desire for annihilation is supreme. 'They eat religiously, drink religiously, bathe religiously, dress religiously, and sin religiously.'

There is hardly one representation of the Hindu gods (who, by the way, are scarcely ever black, but white like Europeans) that is not ugly and repulsive to a degree almost incredible. You see pictures and idols of these gods which suggest the grotesque figures in a pantomime. One god has the head of an elephant; another the head of a monkey—and so on. 'The shape and operations of divine and semi-divine beings,' says Sir Monier Williams,

'are generally suggestive of the monstrous, the frightful, the hideous, and the incredible, the deeds of its heroes, who are themselves half-gods, transport the imagination into the region of the wildest chimera; and a whole pantheon presents itself, teeming with grotesque and unwieldy symbols, with horrible creations, half-animals, half-gods, with man-eating ogres, many-headed giants and disgusting demons.'*

The stories concerning these gods and goddesses are not only contemptible and ridiculous, they are so frightfully obscene and so abominably filthy that they cannot even be obscurely hinted or vaguely adumbrated in English print. 'The stories related of Krishna's life,' says one authority, 'do more than anything else to destroy the morals and corrupt the imagination of Hindu youth.'

The generous people who take that easy view of idolatry made popular by Carlyle's bludgeoning rhetoric, would find themselves forced to other opinions if they lived in the house of a Hindu and witnessed the continual and painful service rendered to these absurd effigies of brass or clay. An Indian himself has shown the folly of the thesis that an idol is an instrument for elevating the mind to a realization of an invisible god. 'For whatever Hindu purchases an idol in the market, or constructs one with his own hands, or has one made under his own superintendence, it is his invariable practice to perform certain ceremonies, called *Pran Pratishtha,* or the endowment of animation, by which he believes that its nature is changed from that of the mere materials of which it is formed, and that it acquires not only life but supernatural powers. Shortly afterwards, if the idol be of the masculine

* See page 342

gender, he marries it to a feminine one: with no less pomp and magnificence than he celebrates the nuptials of his own children. The mysterious process is now complete; and the god and goddess are esteemed the arbiters of his destiny, and continually receive his most ardent adoration.'*

It is a truth, as another writer points out, that this idolatry is much the same as a child's play with its dolls. 'Little children talk to their dolls as if they had life. They dress them, pretend to give them food, put them to sleep, and so forth. Grown-up people do the same. They treat their idols as living beings. They offer them food, though they cannot eat; they have different kinds of music before idols that cannot hear; they wave lights before what cannot see. In the cold season they furnish them with warm clothes; in the hot season they fan them; and lest mosquitoes should bite them, they place them within curtains at night.'

This is the religion of by far the greatest number of India's inhabitants. If the reader has any doubt in his mind as to the faithfulness of my summary, let him obtain a copy of *Popular Hinduism*, published by the Christian Literature Society for India, which contains authoritative quotations not only from such European scholars as Max Müller, Monier Williams, and Alfred Lyall, but from the writings of converted Hindus and the sacred books of Hinduism itself. A perusal of this little volume, saving the labour and distress of a profounder study which is really not worth a serious man's while, will bring an overwhelming conviction to the mind of any just person that

* In this rite one seems to perceive the dim origin of a later doctrine called Transubstantiation.

Hinduism, root and branch, is the absurdest superstition imaginable, that it has its rise in a savage animalism, and contains absolutely nothing which can be of the very smallest service to the evolution of humanity.

What I have written will lead the reader, I hope, to perceive that the true attitude for Europe towards India is that of the adult towards the child. It would be unjust to view the immoralities of the Hindus with the same measure of indignation meet and necessary in the case of a European. One must feel pity for a people so kindly, so docile and so simple who are so blind to universal truth and so marvellously obedient to authority. They are as children frightened by darkness and haunted by the ghost stories of their parents. It is not with them as with certain schools of religion in Europe, that their superstition is an affectation and their ritualism a pose in æstheticism. *They are terribly in earnest.* It is necessary always to remind oneself that these toiling and obedient millions are as childlike in reason and intuition, and as real and earnest in their childishness, as the Children of Israel.

This, then, is the religion which Brahmanism sets itself to guard. And the object of Brahmanism's solicitude is not the religion itself, but the paralysing and emasculating effect of that religion on the peoples whose submissiveness is essential to its own power.* Brahmanism, which can still order an educated man who has broken caste to take into his mouth the five products of the cow, which can still make a Rajah go barefoot in penance to the sea while itself rides triumphantly in a palanquin, which can still keep seventy million people in a condition of absolute helotry, is such a power in

* See page 342

priestcraft as nothing in the history of ancient times or the mediæval chronicles of the Latin Church can even faintly parallel. And against this mighty and utterly unscrupulous force, standing guard over the Hindu temple of terror and holding in its hand the scourge of earthly chastisement and the flaming keys of hell, the soul of European democracy is now going up in many forms which strike terror to its heart, but in none so menacing to its power and so threatening to its peace, as in the form of the meek and lowly Christ with His gospel of the cleansed heart and His promise of liberation from the sense of sin.

Christianity, I beg you to believe, is the supreme enemy of Brahmanism. The victory of Christ in India is the victory of enlightenment as well as of elevation, of freedom as well as of virtue, of joy, courage, and hope, as well as the victory of moral grandeur.

If you would know the full difference between Brahmanism and Christianity consider that Brahmanism in many parts of India takes into its temples little girls of ten and twelve years of age, that with pomp and ceremony it marries these poor children to a god, that the children are kept in the temple to sing and dance before satyr-inspired worshippers, that the money paid for their moral corruption by these worshippers goes to the priests, and that as soon as they reach an age which is considered unprofitable, they are turned out into a strange and friendless world to become the slave-women of any pimp or pandar of the bazaar.*

In the following chapters I hope to give the reader from the diary of my travels and the chronicles

* This well-known state of affairs is fully described in a book entitled, *Things as they are in Southern India.*

of my conversations with Indians, as well as a graphic picture of Indian life, a clearer and more human idea of the difference between Christianity and Hinduism. But this present chapter will surely suffice to rid the mind of Europeans corrupted by theosophical moonings and mystical sentimentalism of the monstrous delusion that there is anything in Hinduism which can be of the smallest service to humanity, or that it has achieved anything in the long course of its history except the debasement, the degradation, and the defilement of human nature.

Aryan philosophers have uttered beautiful ideas, Dravidian poets have composed mellifluous verses, thoughts gracious and pleasing are woven here and there like golden threads into the immense and sombre fabric of Indian literature; but Hinduism, the religion of the ruck, in the long course of its development has contributed neither glory to history nor honour to humanity, man's knowledge of the universe owes it not a farthing of debt, freedom is contemptuous of it, and conduct can accuse it justly of a thousand crimes.*

* See page 343

TWO PANDALS

ACCOMPANIED by a friend and fellow-traveller, I set out soon after landing in Bombay for the South of India, where I was to meet Fakir Singh, see parts of the country seldom visited by the tourist, and make acquaintance with a subject which has always had a curious interest for my mind—humanity's worship of evil as represented by devil-dancing and other perversions of the religious conscience.

To reach Trivandrum, chief city of Travancore, an independent state in Southern India, we journeyed by train to Quilon, climbing into the tall mountains where elephants, tigers, sambur, and other creatures of the jungle range through a forest of dense and far-spreading beauty. We descended in many sweeping circles, through the rich splendours of sunset, to sea-level on the other side, and thus on to the end of the railway journey. It was eight o'clock in the evening when our train stopped at Quilon. The platform of the station was thronged by a multitude of half-naked, chocolate-coloured natives. Through this loud-chattering mass of people we made our way to the refreshment room, ate our dinner, and a few minutes before nine set out to walk through the town of Quilon to the boats which were to carry us through the night on the backwaters of Travancore to the capital city of Trivandrum.

The moon was shining above the palm-trees, and except for the circle dazzled by her radiance, the sky was studded with stars which burned, twinkled, and glittered with an indescribable magnificence. The dark, mysterious, and tree-shaded streets of Quilon were crowded with barefoot natives who passed us by as silently as ghosts or approached us out of the shadows with the suddenness of apparitions. The houses in the streets showed no lights till we reached the market, where a row of stalls glowed with a soft yellow brightness and a little pandal, an open erection of bamboo and leaves, set up for the celebration of a Muhamadan festival called Mohurrum, occupied a garish corner and shone with all the momentary and tinsel vivacity of an English fair. For a few moments we were surrounded by a gaping mob who eyed us with consuming interest, and whispered among themselves as to this sudden appearance of two Englishmen in their midst. A couple of rickshaws followed us into the gloom of the trees, the men in the shafts sounding their spring bells and inviting us to ride.

We came presently to the backwaters. Steps dug in the banks led us down to the Indian country passage-boats, called vullums. These strange vessels resemble the gondola of Venice, but without the tourist note. They are long and narrow, with a slightly raised prow, carved into some unintelligible design. The timbers are not nailed together, but sewn with cohair and made water-tight with fish-oil. The middle is roofed with palm leaves laced and woven into a rounded framework of bamboo. Part of this roof is movable, and can be pushed back to leave an open space in the centre. The floor is covered with matting, on which a bed can

be made at either end. The crew, for a long journey, consists of four natives, two in the bows, and two in the stern. They shove the boats along with bamboo poles in shallow water, and row it with long oars ending in a small spoon-shaped blade when they enter the lakes. At intervals they are relieved by fresh men from the scattered villages along the banks. These men are good-looking, chocolate-coloured, black-haired people, having abrupt features, a protruding lower lip, fine eyes, and bodies as thin and wiry as a vigorous English boy.

I am still haunted by the memory of that night journey through the backwaters of Travancore. Although the sea was almost within a stone's-throw, and although the backwaters are tidal and salt, there was no sense of the ocean in the air, no sound of its unrest through the trees, and no touch of its vastness in the long, narrow line of water stretching before us through the trees. The silence was that of primeval forest. The scents were inland and tropical. The peace was immemorial and eternal. The air which came to one with the movement of the boat was warm and soft and caressing, like the breath of a sleeping child.

On either bank, tall and graceful palm-trees crowded in a density through which neither star-shine nor moonlight could make a glimmer. The trunks of those nearest to us leaned with a tired languor towards the water, and their heavy branches of burnished green drooped downwards, tired and depressed, as though weighted by the moonlight, burning on their outer plumes. High overhead, in central heaven, the full moon, double-ringed with orange fire, veiled the blinding brightness of her beauty and poured upon the aisle of water, not shafts of lidless light, but slumbrous dust of silver

—a falling mist of clouded radiance which was like an opiate to the senses.

Every now and then we saw on the banks mud huts roofed with palm-leaves, and heard a woman crooning to her child. The rhythmic sound of the poles, first striking the water and, after the shove, rising with a dripping noise to the moonlight, came to our ears with the calls of birds disturbed in the forest. We heard, too, the monotonous sound of bare feet in the prow and in the stern, as the punters moved backwards and forwards at their work.

I watched the stars and gave myself up to the breathing charm of the forest, till my senses were drowned in sleep. Under a canopy of palm-leaves, my head resting on a pillow, my body covered by a sheet, I fell into as calm and blissful a sleep as the serenity of stars ever gave to mortal man. But only for a brief space did I lose myself in this deep slumber. I woke to the discordance of hell. Shouts, yells, screams filled my ears. I raised my head and looked out. The forest had disappeared. There was neither moon nor stars. All was darkness—a pitchy blackness which hid everything from the eyes and closed about one like a muffling cloak. I felt the boat moving forward at a furious speed, but could see no water. I knew that the natives were pressing on their poles, but could hear no sound of their pattering feet. Clamour and darkness were all I could comprehend. Then a light flashed at me—close to the edge of the boat.

We were passing through a long tunnel in the mountains, and the shouting noise came from the natives at either end of our long craft. They were making pandemonium to drive away, or at any rate to keep at arm's length, the devils supposed to haunt the interior darkness of the earth. A drizzle of

water dripped from the curved roof of the tunnel. Lamps were burning dimly in the walls at far distances.

Soon I relapsed into the deliciousness of my former oblivion, and when I next opened my eyes it was a few minutes before the dawn. At the end of the green arcade of water and trees, the sky was ribbed with bars of grey cloud edged with scarlet flame; beneath this grating was a flare of liquid yellow: above it the sunless sky was the softest of pale blues. As we looked, the grey bars of clouds thinned into flecks of fire which rose and presently floated away like a flock of birds. The green lines of palm-trees began to dazzle the eyes; the liquid yellow of the distant horizon became so radiant that it hurt the gaze; and then out of the water flooding with fire rose the red rim of the sun and throbbed and blinked and pulsated till distance glowed like molten gold and the whole earth became conscious of heat.

The crew were laughing at their work. Their thin arms as they lifted the poles shone with sweat, their legs as they walked forward and pushed off with one foot from the curved prow ran with moisture, their chocolate-coloured backs bending and straining, every muscle visible and hard, glittered with a dew of toil. Their faces were as wet as if they had been plunged into water. In a language of guttural velocity they called to each other, and laughed across their faces, showing teeth as white as the flesh of coco-nuts. The palms of their hands and the soles of their feet were as pale as a European's.

In issuing from the canals and passing across the lakes we had glimpses of natives working in the rice-fields—little armies of black men and

women almost as naked as on the day they were born. The air was now filled with the song of birds. Dragon-flies of brilliant colour flashed past us with a buzz. On either side were gorgeous flowers and the rich leafage of croton plants. The colours of the rainbow glowed at us from the wings of birds and butterflies. . . .

Before noon we reached Trivandrum and disembarked at a landing-stage crowded with natives. We left our servant to bring on the luggage, and set out in a gharry for the Travellers' Bungalow.

Trivandrum is a city which is never seen. No one has set eyes upon it. From the Maharajah in his palace and the able representative of Great Britain at the Residency, down to the oldest coolie and the most ancient harridan among the outcast sweepers, no one has beheld Trivandrum. For this mighty city, with thousands of inhabitants, has been built into a forest so vast as to hide it, and so undulating as to separate it into hundreds of scattered fragments. Red roads, soft and dusty, wind through the forest; and as one drives along, a church or a bungalow appears for a moment and then as suddenly disappears; a line of mud huts wedged between the trees scarcely discloses itself as a native street, so dense is the gloom, so subdued the colour of the huts; a clearing made in the trees for a palace or a mansion seems like a trivial vista in the midst of an everlasting jungle of immemorial trees.

The Travellers' Bungalow is said to be one of the very best of these Governmental rest-houses in India. The secret is that sometimes it is used for an overflow of guests from the British Residency. The rooms are large and lofty; the furniture is good and cool; the service is excellent; and the

food eatable. It is a beautiful low building, with a red-tiled roof, a portico hung with cool ferns in the centre of the veranda, and a pleasant, if dusty garden, where the sun beats upon hundreds of flowers and the crows ceaselessly caw from the surrounding trees which shut it in and altogether isolate it from the rest of Trivandrum.

That evening we made the acquaintance of an Englishman on the veranda, and after smoking a cigar with him, strolled, at his suggestion, through the garden and out into the moonlighted road, to visit a neighbouring pandal across the road, in which was being celebrated the festival of Mohurrum. Our presence in the group of Mussulmans occasioned some surprise, but the crowd parted for us, a lounging figure in white, with a fez on his black head, rose hurriedly to greet us with a smiling courtesy, and we were conducted to the chief seats in front of the garish pandal and offered cigarettes and cigars. This pandal, which had a kind of altar or shrine at the back, before which food was placed for the Prophet, was decorated with tinsel stars, Japanese lanterns, paper flags of various colours, and branches of palm.

It was a scene most picturesque and Asian. The ground in front of us was occupied by squatting figures in various coloured dresses and turbans and loin cloths; a large Punch and Judy box faced us in the distance, occupied by two men with a little girl in the centre, motionless, and whitened. Men dressed as women and animals danced and joked and clowned in the little space immediately before our chairs. At every ten minutes or so, the tom-tom was banged monotonously and the whole company broke into a nasal drone which deafened the ears and made discord of peace and mind.

From first to last this religious festival was prurient and suggestive, everything turning upon sexualism. Certain things that I saw cannot be written, but on the whole the immorality was rather that of corrupted children than the abhorrent bestiality of depraved minds. It was rather jaded iniquity than determined depravity. Again and again I found myself regarding the people as children, and in their simple smiling faces and the almost listless character of their attention, I saw that one should feel pity for them, and not judge them as men before whom a choice has been presented and who have elected for iniquity. They were beating the tom-tom, singing their songs, and dancing their wriggling dances till three o'clock in the morning.

I have mentioned this trivial incident as a contrast to what follows, as a contrast which should bring home to the least imaginative of readers the immense difference between the mind of Christ and the mind of Asia.

On the day following our arrival in Trivandrum we were invited by Fakir Singh to attend an afternoon meeting in the compound of the Salvation Army's Girls' School, where another and far bigger pandal had been set up, but for a very different purpose. Of all the sights I saw in India, this was one that made the most instant impression. When we arrived, we found the trees surrounding the sun-flooded compound filled in all their branches with men and boys; the great space of the compound in front of the pandal entirely occupied by a dense multitude of men and women; the pandal itself filled from end to end with boys and girls; and the veranda of the school packed with high-caste natives, officers of the army, and European residents

interested in the amazing work of the Salvation Army. It was one of the most striking congregations I have ever seen. And all those squatting thousands on the ground surrounding the pandal, all those bird-like figures loading the trees, all that mass of black-faced and solemn-eyed humanity packed so tightly and sitting so patiently, had come into Trivandrum from the neighbouring villages, some of them twenty-five and thirty miles away, to hear the story of that Divine Man whose Personality has revolutionized the other side of the world. They had brought their food with them; they had slept under the trees or in their bullock-carts on the way, and to-night, after the long entertainment had come to an end they would stretch their rolls of matting on the ground where they were now sitting, and sleep till the dawn.

These villagers were in some cases the laity of the Salvation Army, in some cases inquirers, and in some cases waverers not yet wholly persuaded to abandon their gods of terror and give themselves to a God perfectly pure, perfectly holy, and perfectly kind. They had been sought in their distant villages by officers of the Army, and for a year at least many of them had gathered together to hear the Bible read and listen to the preachers of Christ.

The first part of the afternoon's programme was given to the children. We heard the boys' band playing such music as tom-tom and bamboo-reed can never make—glad music, and strong music, music to which men can march with their heads upright, a music made for triumph and unconquerable hope. To teach these boys any music at all is something of a victory, but to teach them such music as we heard, and to teach them to play it so

accurately and with such a swing in its joy—this is achievement of a notable kind. And the music had passed into the souls of the boys. Instead of slouching bodies, they stood upright and strong; instead of matted or twisted hair, their heads were as neat and brushed as a British soldier's; instead of scowling looks and heavy sensualism, their faces were bright with intelligence and glad with health. It seemed an illusion that these handsome and smart boys could be the sons of the crouching villagers massed together in the dust of the compound.

We saw a company of girls in pretty frocks perform a drill with their coloured scarves. We heard them sing. We heard them recite. We saw them act. From beginning to end, only a little nervousness marred the performance of these childish minds awaking to intelligence. They looked so pretty and charming, they were so kempt and self-respecting, there was such understanding in their eyes and in the smiling curves of their lips, that one had constantly to remind oneself that these were the children of heathen villagers, so profoundly ignorant and so disastrously superstitious that they can almost be described as savages.*

But the first note of definite religious interest came when Fakir Singh, Commissioner for the Salvation Army in India, rose to address the multitude. He began by saying that everybody there had at least heard about Jesus, that they all knew

* For five shillings a month the Salvation Army can feed, clothe, and teach a child in its excellent schools. It is only lack of money which keeps a host of children outside those crowded doors. I looked at the savage children and I looked at the children of the Army, and felt how hard it was that the one should be blessed and the other cursed.

what Jesus asked humanity to become, and that the One True God Who is the Father of humanity only asks His children to conquer their sins in order that they may be everlastingly happy as pure angels in a beautiful heaven. I watched the faces of the multitude. Heads were bent forward to hear, in all those thousands of eyes there was intensity of interest, in not one single face did I see self-consciousness, stupidity, or an inclination to smile. Men and women, young men and young girls—the whole vast multitude, listened with a rapt attention. They were like enthralled children listening to a story.

Then came a dramatic incident. Suddenly in the midst of his simple talk the Fakir asked how many of the people who had heard about Jesus wanted to conquer their sins and to become gentle and kind, pure and virtuous, good and holy. In a second the air was filled with lifted arms. I do not think there was a single person in all that large gathering who did not lift an arm to heaven.

'Those hands of yours,' said the Fakir, his eyes shining and his voice very quiet and earnest, 'are prayers. Your Father sees them and understands. He beholds you with a tender and compassionate love. He knows your hearts—your hearts which are hidden from all the world. According to your sincerity He will answer your prayer. And now let us bow our heads, and fold our hands, and pray to Him in silence.'

It was an unforgettable sight. The faces which a moment before had been raised to the speaker—faces of men, many of them expressing every degree of savagery and woe, bestiality and suffering: faces of women strangely beautiful and yet marred by a frowning discontent or a heavy animalism—became suddenly bowed and hidden.

The compound was filled with silence. Not a finger was moved. Not a robe stirred. The multitude was motionless. And the sun beat down through the trees on this field of humanity lifting its soul to God.

One realized at that moment how frightful is the penalty of sin, and how immediate the appeal of Christ to the human soul once definitely conscious of its misery. Many of these villagers who have hitherto followed their natural inclinations all the days of their lives, who have ever felt the world to be simple animalism, and the universe filled with gods as lustful and bestial as themselves, who can live so easily and with so little dread, who are surrounded by nature's most lovely manifestations, and enjoy a climate which is summer almost from year's end to year's end —are wretched and unhappy, are conscious of something wrong in life, are aware of something inexpressible and undefined which disquiets and hurts their hearts. And immediately they hear the simple story of the Christ, they feel the sun shine into the darkness of their souls and an answering response stirring in the depths of their hearts. They do not say, Is it true? They do not dispute and contend. They set no casuistry of the mind between their souls and the great joy coming to them out of the new heavens. They only know that it is restful and sweet to lay the burden of their long misery at the feet of One Who is sinless and compassionate, human and Divine: that to set themselves for the sake of this adorable Person to be better, presents a goal which more really and worthily fills and widens the horizon of their lives than the labour of the fields: and that to contemplate God as a Father Who cares for them, and, because He cares for them,

is seeking to fit them for higher joys and purer heights of being than anything they can imagine or dream, makes of existence at one stroke a rational and a glorious opportunity.

These villagers had streamed into the town of Trivandrum, not so much to see their children performing in the afternoon, as to hear in the evening once more, and this time in a new way, the story of Christ. Officers of the Salvation Army had visited them in their houses, had held meetings in their villages, and had read them from the New Testament the story of Christ; but now they were actually to see with their eyes what hitherto they had heard with their ears.

In the evening the compound was more densely crowded than in the afternoon. At least five thousand people—probably many more—were sitting on the ground under the stars, fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, brothers and sisters—a dense swarm of black-faced and almost naked humanity, whose eyes reflected the moonlight and whose white turbans and loin cloths shone like the cerements of a graveyard wakened to immortality. Only a few lamps were burning. The interior of the pandal was occupied at the back by a white sheet. In the centre of the multitude was an officer of the Army with a magic lantern. When the lights were put out, and the people had sung a hymn, one could still see the glitter of eyes and the shine of dark skins in the moonlight.

It was very striking to observe the effect made upon these awaking savages by the picture of General Booth when it appeared upon the sheet. There was a cry of admiration and love, hands were clapped with an abandonment to enthusiasm, and then a shout of acclaim rose from all the host. One

thought of the humble work begun in East London only a few years ago by a Nottingham preacher, and reminded oneself of the fame of this old man, not only in the distant forests of Southern India, but all over the wide world and among all the various races of humanity.

There were other pictures: and then came the Life of Christ, told by paintings and moving-pictures. As one followed the simple story, through all the beauty of its earlier incidents to the culminating tragedy which has changed the heart of the human race and given a new heaven to the soul of man, one perceived how infinitely higher and more compelling, how infinitely more human and Divine, how infinitely simpler and appealing is the religion of Christ than all the perversions of religion which have nailed the soul of Asia to the rock of suffering and sin. They cannot be compared. Hinduism is not another path to God; it is a pit of abomination as far set from God as the mind of man can go. It is not the Bread of Life, but the Dead Sea fruit of bitterness and death. It is not hope, but despair. It is not effort, but surrender. It is not attainment, but defeat.

When the story had been told, a lamp was brought into the pandal, and the Fakir stood up and appealed to those whose hearts had been touched and searched by the pictures, that very night to come out and make petition to heaven for its mercy and its love. He spoke in simple language, making use of parables which a child might understand, and set himself to awaken in the multitude a desire for goodness and a longing for peace of heart. Nothing could have been more simple, more quiet, more true. It was the Christianity of the Mount of Olives.

For a moment or two after his appeal there was silence, breathless and nervous. He made a second appeal, saying, 'Who will be the first to come out and ask God to forgive his sins?' A young man rose from the midst of the sitting multitude, and made his difficult way to the pandal. He was clothed in a white turban and a white loin cloth, with a shoulder cloth of white hanging at one side of his body. He was tall, good-looking and of great strength. There was a sulky nobility in his eyes and an obstinate resolution in his strong lips. He looked neither to the right nor to the left. His head was a little bowed. His arms moved gracefully at his sides. The light of the lamp shone in his eyes and the light of the moon on his black shoulders and neck. He was like a shepherd.

Others followed his example. One saw officers of the Salvation Army, Indians and Europeans, moving among the seated thousands, and bending down to speak to them. In the meantime the wide and spacious pandal was crowded with kneeling figures. Women and girls congregated together, and women of the Salvation Army kneeled at their sides, mothering them, and encouraging their prayers. Men formed by far the greater number of kneeling figures, most of them young men between twenty and thirty years of age. They kneeled in the dust, their hands at their sides, their eyes opened, their heads slightly raised—figures so still that they might have been carved in ebony.

There was now a ceaseless stream of men and women into the pandal. The seriousness of the procession, and the solemnity of the kneeling multitude, made a profound impression. Presently, encouraged by the Fakir, who moved amongst them praying and blessing them, the whole kneeling

company began to pray aloud. The noise of those deep voices filled the night. Each man prayed his own prayer, uttered his own longings, expressed his own needs. In a low monotone, rising to an almost ringing earnestness, thousands of Tamils and Malayalis lifted their voices to the Father of humanity, while the hundreds in the pandal besought Him to forgive their sins, to heal their wretchedness, and to accept them as His children.

Imagine the scene. As far as eye could see, stretching out into the glimmering moonlight of an Eastern garden, there were thousands of half-naked people sitting and standing on the ground, hunched up on the boughs of trees, packed shoulder to shoulder on the walls. Under a great open tent of palm-leaves, where a lamp was burning and unlighted paper lanterns were hanging from the branches, hundreds of men and women were kneeling and praying to God, with white and black officers of the Salvation Army moving in and out among them. Those officers represented many nations: among them were a Brahman, a Singhalese, a Malayali, a Tamil, a German, a Norwegian, a Swede, an Australian, an Englishman, and a Scot. All were praying. The voices of these various nationalities rose in the air with a cry inspired by love for a sinless Ideal, with a passion and a longing uttered from the need of their common humanity; and all these separate voices and different words rose in a perfect unison, like the prayer of a single family under their father's roof. One felt that the unity of nations is not a dream, but one of the very first and most certain results of a catholic Christianity. The kneeling host, the rolling thunder of their supplication, the moonlight, the solemn stillness of the

trees, the reverence and quiet of the watching multitude, and those servants of God drawn to India out of all the nations of the earth moving to and fro in the midst of them—one felt at that moment the passion of religion and the Fatherhood of God.

I can still see those kneeling Children of India. I can still see the disciples of Christ moving amongst them. I can still feel the soft and scented air of that Eastern night, and see the moonlight shining on the white garments of the watching multitude. And I can still hear, as though it were an organ in the next room, the mighty sound of those many voices rolling up to their new heaven and making appeal to their new God and their first Father in heaven. As I recall that scene, I see the sensual grins and jaded eyes of the poor Mussulmans round their street-corner pandal in honour of Mohurrum.

An hour after this wonderful experience, I was talking to a man who had been devil-possessed for many years, and whose remarkable story appears in the next chapter. When I parted with him and issued from the interior of the school premises, I found the veranda occupied by women sleeping on mats and the whole wide garden strewn with sleeping figures. In the moonlight, surrounded by the tall trunks of palmyra and coco-nut palms, and by the interwoven branches of flowering shrubs and scented trees, the spectacle was one of singular beauty and a most gracious appeal. Those tired sleepers, sleeping in the dust of the garden, had come many miles through the hills and the forest to hear the story of Christ; the bullocks and carts of some of them were visible in the shadows; the sound of their breathing was like the noise of a summer sea; before the dawn they would be moving

with their wives and families back through the jungle, and back over the hills, to the mud huts of their distant villages. Some of them that very night had 'found Christ.' Some of them were sleeping with a new peace in their hearts and a new joy in their souls. All of them, perhaps, had drawn at least a little closer to the Light of the World.

It was like a scene from the Bible. The heaviness of the languorous leafage, the softness of the air, the extreme brightness of the moon, and the grinding splendour of the stars—these, and the breathing multitude hooded and wrapped in white garments, lying at full length on the ground, so silent and so still, filling the whole garden with the sense of human weariness and heavenly care—touched the mind with thoughts of those who had crossed the hills of Galilee two thousand years ago on a like errand.

One walked softly through that garden, not for fear of awaking the sleepers, but out of reverence for the hush which brooded there like the blessing of God.

THE DEVIL-DANCER

He crouched against a wall, one leg under him, an elbow resting on the upraised knee of the other leg, with the hand pressed against his face. He was naked except for a sack-coloured shoulder cloth and a grey covering about his loins. His skin was a dusk-deadened copper. His black hair stood out from the sides of his head and rose in tangled confusion from his brow. The dark eyebrows pressed upon the lids of long and watchful eyes which were full of serious brightness. The upper lip was shaded by a line of smooth hair. The mouth was sullen and threatening; when he spoke the lips opened quickly and wide, showing teeth which had been filed to tigerish sharp points. Across the prominent cheek bones the face was broad and vigorous; at the chin it was pointed and peevish. I have seen few animals so naked of dignity and repose, and no human being outside of a madhouse so unalterably marked with mental anguish.

I sat on a chair in front of him, and at his side knelt an Indian officer of the Salvation Army, able to speak the man's difficult dialect, who acted as interpreter. While I was speaking the crouching Malayali regarded me with a look of watchful fear; when my question was interpreted he turned his head to the Salvationist and spoke rapidly, in a voice of

eager anxiety, using few gestures with his arms, but those fine and commanding, often rolling his head from side to side in distress at not making himself understood, or raising his eyes to the roof of the veranda under which he was crouching with a look of most eloquent faith and joy in God—a small, animal-like human being, with dawning intelligence and exhausted misery in his eyes, and the beginnings of a new philosophy in his just awakened soul.

He lived in a distant village in Southern India where for many centuries the people have offered propitiatory worship to a particularly odious devil. His father was a devil-possessed man who lived by using his power to exorcise from others devils less powerful than those which tormented him. The faith of the village did not trouble itself with gods, good or immoral. The people believed in a power of evil definitely and eternally arrayed against them. To offer sacrifices and perform ceremonies which would placate this afflicting devil seemed to them obviously more rational than to supplicate any god whose beneficent qualities surely guaranteed them against the possibility of attack from that quarter.

The dancer's father may be described as a priest of this devil-worship. He was not only the most powerful exorciser of devils, he was not only a seeker of favours from his devil, but he had definitely made a compact with this devil to serve him on earth and in the worlds beyond. In some dreadful and unrecorded moment of his tortured life this man of the jungle and the mountains had sold his soul to that power of evil in the universe which seemed to him the master of his fate. Henceforth, a freeman of hell, he offered sacrifices in a devil grove, and went about the villages earning money for the arrack he drank day and night by casting out devils and

praying for favours and mercy to the chief of the devils in the name of those troubled with sickness, calamity, and fear.

The boy was twelve years of age when his father was stricken with illness. He was a normal boy of the village, quick and vivacious, but as heathen and ignorant as all the rest of his community. Up till that time he had little troubled his head about devils, beyond taking care never to go out after dark and always to avoid such places as burying grounds, where a great number of devils were known to have their dwelling. But now he had a new-birth and experienced a perverted conversion, terrible in the consequences. The father was raving and gnashing his teeth on his death-bed. The family stood round the writhing figure, regarding it with consternation. Suddenly the father started up, and seizing his son by the long hair of his head, dragged the boy down to him, and rubbing ashes upon his head cried in a loud voice, 'Promise me to serve the devil—promise me, promise me!' Then, loosing the child, he spread his arms to the group of his wife and children, and implored them with his last breath to yield their souls to the devil. His last words were, 'Serve the devil.'

For three or four days nothing occurred. The life of the family went on as usual. The death of the devil-possessed father seemed to make no difference in its fortunes. There was the same poverty, the same frugality, the same misery, and the same monotony of labour. But one night as the eldest son lay on his ragged mat waiting for sleep, he felt himself suddenly stricken with a deadly cold which convulsed all his limbs and shook him with so great a trembling that the teeth rattled and gridded in his mouth. He says that he saw nothing,

but that he felt the approach of a devil. He was powerless to scream, powerless to ward off the attack. He lay in a breathless and palsy-stricken terror. Then, as if a cloud had swallowed him up, he felt his body occupied by something not himself, became aware of an overshadowing and masterful spirit sitting in the tenement of his body and taking absolute possession of his will.

He became unconscious. Early in the morning he awoke, and leaving his house plunged into the jungle and ascended the mountains. He does not know why he sought this solitude, he cannot tell why he was not afraid of beasts and evil spirits; driven into the wilderness by the demon possessing him, he simply went on and on, a leaf blown by the wind, a spar swept by the waves, a soul bereft of volition and the power of determination.

He threw himself down from heights. He felt himself lifted off his feet into the air. He beat himself with stones, tore out his hair, and scratched his flesh with his nails till it was wet with blood. The night came and he was not afraid. Without sleep and without fatigue, he wandered hither and thither, wailing and groaning, shouting and singing, laughing and crying. He was conscious neither of hunger nor thirst. The hot sun blazed down upon his unprotected head, and he sought no shade. His body became burned with the heat, and he sought no water. With a consciousness which seemed to be drowning, suffocating, and expiring, he felt himself swept forward by the devil possessing him, and had neither the will nor the wish to fight for his safety.

How long he remained in the jungle on that occasion he does not remember. He returned eventually to his home and found that his fame

was established as a devil-possessed boy. He explains that his devil was hereditary; that as far as memory could reach members of his family had been possessed by spirits; that at the death of the father the eldest son always inherited the family's devil. Every one in the village, and in some of the neighbouring villages, recognized his devil as the one which had possessed the father. He was called on to exorcise devils, and was given gifts of rice for his services.

Up till the moment of his possession he had been a good boy. He had been, that is to say, perfectly moral and obedient. He is quite certain on this point. And he is also quite certain that from the moment of his possession he became one of the greatest scoundrels in that neighbourhood. He became sexually vile and dreadful. He craved for the disgusting spirit called arrack. He loved to eat and rub himself with filthy things. It gave him, not pain, but positive pleasure, to stab and slash himself with a knife. His arms are yet rutted with gashes and his neck pitted with the marks of his stabbings. He could handle fire, and would rub it on his head and body without being either blistered or hurt. He could put himself into a terrible frenzy and perform in this state acts of strength and daring which sent his fame into all the countryside. He told us what were the signs of his devil's activity and frenzies. He would begin to spit blood, then he would be shaken with a palsy, then his senses would become jumbled, muddled, and covered with a muffling obscurity, and for one night every bone in his body would ache as though he had been beaten by many clubs. After that he was possessed and swept forward for days and weeks by the devil possessing him.

He never saw his devil, or any other devil; but he described with a wonderful quickness of gesture and a sudden flashing of the eyes what he has seen in the darkness of the night and the solitude of the jungle. Light has flashed at him from two sides, flashed with incredible swiftness, as if two fingers of flame sprang upon each other and vanished in the ferocity of their collision; then straight in front of him, a little above the level of his eyes, he has seen a creature like a cat spinning round and round in a rush so electric that it has made a circle of light about it in the darkness; and he has felt monkeys brushing past him and then has seen them disappear into nothingness.

Like his father he dedicated himself to the devil —definitely elected to serve Evil. He became as really possessed by evil spirits as saints have been possessed by the Spirit of God. All his experiences are a perversion of those recorded by holy men and pure women in the literature of Christianity.

On one occasion he spent seven days and nights without nourishment of any kind, committing excesses of indescribable horror in graveyards and wandering through the darkest and most dangerous parts of the jungle.

He became the most celebrated devil-possessed man for many miles around his village. He was regarded with reverence and dread. A man gave him his daughter in marriage, and this woman worshipped the devil. People of high caste sent for him to cure them of sickness or to offer sacrifices to the devil in times of plague or famine. On one occasion a Sudra family—that is to say, a high-caste family—sent for him to cast out a demon afflicting one of its young women. This demon, known as Rectasorie, or blood devil, tore the girl till she was

dabbled all over with blood. The devil-dancer remained with her for seven days, wrestling ceaselessly with that devil, and finally cast it out. The girl was completely restored. The act was commemorated by a silver medal which the Sudra himself hung round the dancer's neck, placing at the same time seven rupees in his hand—a large sum of money for any villager in India to earn at a single stroke.

So great was his fame that it checked the work of Christianity in a neighbouring village where the Salvation Army had lately planted a local Corps. People challenged the Christians to perform such miracles as this man could do every day of the week. The Adjutant was a Malayali, a man converted from the depths of heathenism to the heights of a most beautiful purity. This man, feeling himself unworthy to attempt miracles, set himself to pray for the soul of the devil-dancer. He gave up an entire week to this purpose, and ceaselessly petitioned God all those seven days to give him the soul of the devil-priest.

The answer to his prayer seemed to be a growing conviction that he should go to the man and speak to him of Christ. He set out on this errand full of that utter and childlike faith which is the most striking and attractive feature in the character of an Indian truly and earnestly converted. He went as the first Apostles went on their missions with the good news of a risen Christ. It did not trouble him to think of what he should say; it did not occur to him that his errand was wild and impossible. Full of quiet joy, conscious of a holy spirit leading him forward, he passed barefoot over the dusty road with the sun shining in his eyes through the leaves and branches of the forest.

Half-way to the village he encountered the devil-worshipper on the road. His heart beat with hope at this coincidence so like an answer to his prayer. He stopped him and invited him to rest under the shade of the trees. The devil-dancer's arms were full of live fowls which he was carrying to a devil's temple. He was meditating on the pleasure of killing these birds and smearing himself with the hot blood. When the Adjutant learned this business he said, 'Brother, do not do this act, but come with me to my village and let me tell you in my house the wonderful story of Jesus, Who has power to save all men and to cast out all devils.'

Greatly wondering, the dancer consented, and the two men set out for the Adjutant's village. On the way the story of Jesus was told to the devil-worshipper. He listened with interest, asked a few questions, and became strangely quiet and tranquil as the journey drew to its end. Once in the house, the Adjutant invited his friend to pray with him. For the first time in his life, the devil-worshipper directed his thoughts to a God of purity and goodness. They prayed together that the devil might be cast out of the dancer, that he might be set free for evermore from the powers of evil, and that his heart might become pure. Once and again the man cried out in terror that he could feel the devil coming to take possession of him; the Adjutant answered these cries by bidding him take courage and pray with stronger faith to the great God over Whom neither man nor devil could triumph. 'Oh, I fear that the devil is coming!' cried the man. 'No: keep praying to God; the devil will not come,' replied the Adjutant. So they prayed, these two Children of India, in a little mud hut on the southern slopes of the Western Ghats whose

palms are stirred by breezes from the sea, prayed to the Father of humanity, to the Jesus of Nazareth, and to the Christ of Calvary, until the sun was hidden and the darkness of evening fell upon the forest. Throughout the day they had prayed, and now at eventide it was well with the man. Suddenly, lifting his head, he cried out in a glad voice—'God has delivered me from the power of the devil! God has come to me! I can feel Him in my heart.'

This event took place more than a year ago. For the first two months he was occasionally thrown into a great fear by feeling that the devil was approaching him. Instant and passionate prayer in every case brought immediate relief. He was never once tempted to drink arrack, to commit any hideous acts, or to indulge in sexual excesses. And now for ten months he has been unmolested by his devil and wholly happy in his heart and soul. If those who have any knowledge of the biting and fastening effect of hereditary superstition on the mind of the savage and ignorant, will reflect upon this instantaneous change of soul, they will confess, whatever their opinion may be as to his possession by a devil, that sincere prayer to a good God produces in the heart of a man changes akin to miracle.

He was twenty-four years of age when the Salvationist first spoke to him. He was a man famous in a vast district, able to live without work, enjoying a notoriety which was flattering to his pride, and as ignorant of God as he was abandoned to loathsome and filthy practices. He is now a man between five-and-six-and-twenty. He lives a life of extreme penury by the toil of field labour, earning a penny or sometimes three half-pence a day. In his spare time he goes among those who formerly feared and respected him, telling them

the story of a Christ Who has delivered him from the power of all the devils in hell. He has become singularly sweet and gentle. He is clean in all his habits, and pure even in the thoughts of his heart. By his testimony many people hitherto abandoned to devil-worship and immorality have become converted to Christ. He is something of a saint and is loved by an increasing company of Christians in the hills of Southern India.

One thing has made a great impression on him. When he was a child he suffered constantly from sickness and disease. When his children were born they, too, suffered in an almost identical fashion. But now, for a whole year, ever since the day of his first prayer to God, those children have been free of sickness and pain, and he himself conscious of a new delight in perfect health. His eyes smile with joy as he tells of this change. 'It is good to believe in God,' he says, with a childlike earnestness and simplicity. He told me it never once occurred to him that there was any sin in serving the devil, and that never once did the thought of spiritual punishment in the next world strike his mind with dread. He felt himself to be so entirely at the mercy of an immense power whom it was impossible to resist, that he resigned himself will-less and unthinking into the arms of a force too mighty for his opposition and too overshadowing for any thought of a good God to enter his mind.

Never till the Salvationist met him in the way had he thought of God, felt himself guilty and debased, or experienced the smallest dread of death.

And now, as I have said, he is something of a saint, is a man of prayer, and a lay missionary, converting the devil-worshippers of his district to the pure and beautiful religion of Jesus Christ.

THE WITCH

THERE is a woman in Southern India whose weird experience in demonology helps one in the twentieth century to understand certain mysterious records in the Old and New Testaments which seem to a superficial judgment quite unreal and wholly unworthy of a serious man's attention. It is certainly a narrative which Mr. Frederic Myers and Professor James would have deemed worthy of a most careful examination.

The woman of whom I tell lives in a poor and once degraded village inhabited by Mala people, and belongs to one of the very lowest castes. As a child she imagined that a Presence was always close at her side, and grew up in the companionship of this mysterious entity, who not only accompanied her into the rice-fields or the jungle, but who sat with her at meals and shared the mat on which she slept in the mud hut of her parents. She talked, without fear and without any sense of the unusual, to this friendly ghost, consulted it, received answers from it, and always guided her conduct by its advice. Sometimes she would see it.

There was nothing dangerous or threatening in this intimacy, and students of psychical science will know that quite healthy European children have imagined for themselves an 'invisible playmate'—

an unseen companion to whom they have talked aloud, and whom they have professed even to see in the shadows of a shrubbery or the darkness of a corridor. There was in the present case nothing to mark out the child either as a privileged intimate of demons or as an unbalanced degenerate. She was strong and healthy. She did her work well, and grew up with the ordinary ideas of a village woman. Her parents found no difficulty in getting her a husband. She bore children who were physically efficient and managed her household with practical common sense. All this time the familiar spirit was at her side, harmless, helpful, and never in the way. She often asked his advice about the buffaloes, the crops, and the children.

At the age of thirty-five she fell suddenly ill. She was seized with a constant and severe vomiting. Her eyesight became dim. People seemed to her blurred and indistinct. She could look without blinking into the face of the midday sun. In this condition, alike puzzling to herself and to her family, she one day became aware of a greater nearness and a more vital reality in the familiar spirit. Its presence became overwhelmingly close; there was a marked insistence in its haunting. For the first time in her life she became afraid, but felt herself powerless to resist this overshadowing menace. For the first time she was conscious in the friendly ghost of enmity and cruelty.

One afternoon, as she lay trembling and apprehensive on her mat, the obsessing demon suddenly sprang upon her, entered her body, and took complete possession of her will. This is her own language, as near as I can express it in English; and I would beg the reader to remember that whatever the explanation of the occurrence may be, to

the woman herself it was undoubtedly a case of demon-possession. The critical reader will also bear in mind that up to this point the woman was perfectly healthy, that she had borne children, and that she was only five-and-thirty years of age.

Possessed by her demon, she became either restored to health or quite indifferent to sickness. She was so strange in manner, and so eloquent in her account of the event, that neither her husband nor her neighbours doubted for a moment that she was the privileged and honoured darling of the demons. Her fame spread through the village. People came at first to see her, and then to consult her. She was sent for by those who had illness in their house or who wanted to avert some disaster from their cattle or crops. She enjoyed the power and notoriety of this new position, but from the very first—on this she is entirely clear and convincingly emphatic—she felt unhappy and distressed by the divided occupation of her brain.

But consider the extraordinary change in her fortunes. From being an ordinary low-caste woman of the village, who worked for the family, cleaned the brass vessels of the household, moulded cow-dung into fire-cakes, worked in the paddy fields, fetched water from the well, and ground rice in the little hand-mill under the veranda of her house, she became so illustrious and terrible to the whole country round about that Brahmans, who consider themselves as gods, actually worshipped before her, while people of the highest caste would remain for hours prostrate before her house. She was practically deified. And she could gain all the rice and dahl necessary for her family's subsistence merely by surrendering herself to trances and letting the demon say what he could through her lips. She

became what the Bible calls a Witch and what psychical science calls a Medium.

For six years she enjoyed an unequalled glory in those parts of India as an oracle and a healer. She cured the sick, she raised the all-but dead, she prevented disaster, and she uttered counsel which brought good-fortune. But all these six years were marked for her by an increasing wretchedness of mind and by a disquiet of soul which became at last utterly intolerable. She, the oracle and chief power of her village, she, a witch famous in all that part of India, would wander away from her home and seek advice from the most humble and degraded devil-dancers as to getting rid of her infernal Control. She performed every magic for this purpose, faithfully obeyed a hundred superstitious rites, and by fasting and supplication sought to oust the mastering devil from her body. But in vain. She drove stakes into the ground and made rings about her house, in order that the devil should not be able to reach her; but, so she declares, he would spring upon her from the roof, and getting possession of her, would fling her to the ground and tear her with a ferocious revenge. She was obliged to go where this devil urged her, to do what he commanded, and to say what he said.

Not very far from her own dwelling was a little village where the Salvation Army had set up its banner of Liberation. She had heard of Christ as 'One to Whom people prayed in trouble.' She had no further knowledge of Christianity, and was entirely unacquainted with the story of Christ's life. He was to her only 'one of the gods.'

It occurred to her, in a mood of utter dejection, that she should make trial of this new God. She said nothing to her family, but set out one day for

the village occupied by the Salvationists. When she arrived she found a meeting in progress. She entered the hall, and advanced to the platform. One who was present tells me that the poor miserable woman appeared to be dazed and unconscious, like a sleep-walker, that when she reached the platform she suddenly uttered a scream which was perfectly 'soul-thrilling,' fell down upon her knees, and seizing the feet of one of the Salvationists, held them in a vice of iron and remained in that posture, shaken by a violent convulsion, for fifteen minutes.

She was praying, but she does not remember what entreaty left her soul or what happened to her. No one had spoken. Nothing had been preached to touch her heart. No hymn had been sung to open a door for her into the way of peace. But she felt conscious of restoration, of something that gave her freedom, above all things of a new and delicious independence of her demon. The mere prostration before this God who was kind to people in trouble brought her a sense of relief.

'I was never afraid after that,' she declares. 'The demon used to come to me, but he did not speak.'

Christianity, be it remembered, was at this time as foreign to her understanding as the literature of Greece or the text-books of physical science.

Some few weeks after this occurrence, she was one day gathering wood in the jungle, when she felt herself moved as by some unseen power to kneel down then and there, and beseech Christ to rid her once and for ever of that devil's presence. 'I did not know that Christ had ever cast out devils,' she says, 'all I knew at that time was His Name, and that people in trouble prayed to Him; nothing more.'

Surrendering herself to this inexplicable and

sudden inclination, the poor gatherer of sticks kneeled down in the solitudes of the jungle, and prayed calmly and articulately to Christ for succour and complete liberation from the menace of evil.

On the instant, she says, the haunting spirit left her.

Amazement was followed by joy, and joy thrilled and swelled in her breast, till it became a glorious gratitude and a passionate adoration. She had not lost a devil. She had found a god. Somewhere in the blue heavens lived One named Christ Who was able to perform extraordinary magic, Who listened when the heart cried to Him, and Who felt compassion for the wretched and the sorrowful. This was all. She knew nothing of a virgin birth, certainly nothing of an immaculate conception, nothing of the Lake of Galilee, the Mount of Olives, Calvary, the garden sepulchre, the road to Emmaus, and the road to Damascus. Nothing of theology, nothing even of Christianity. She was neither baptized nor confirmed. Of such a book as the Bible she had never heard. Christ, for her, was one of the gods, but one to Whom people in trouble prayed; and out of her great wretchedness and with a very willing surrender of her whole being, she had prayed, and the prayer had been answered.

It was with wonder unspeakable that she learned the earth-story of Christ from the Salvationists to whom she carried in a joyous gratitude the news of her deliverance. She was spell-bound by the simple beauty and the poignant tragedy of that story. Converted already, for nothing will shake her from the certainty that she gave her soul to Christ alone in the jungle, she became a Christian, and went back to her village with the supreme intention of telling others the good news of Liberation.

You can imagine how different now the village seemed in her eyes. She had embraced the idea of a God who is Good; she had perceived religion as something definitely concerned with the moral advancement of humanity. In her village, devils were worshipped out of fear, gods were ceremonially served for material prosperity, and no one paid the very smallest attention to morality. It was a little habitation of men and women, sunken in iniquity and practising unspeakable abominations without shame and without the least idea of any need for reformation.

The Witch, seeing all these accustomed things with new eyes, set herself to teach the people our pure religion breathing household laws. But she, before whom Brahmans had prostrated themselves, and to whom evil had been a power and an autocracy, found herself now as a virtuous and God-loving woman, the scorn and derision of all the people. Those who had kneeled to her, treated her now as 'untouchable'; those who had feared and trembled before her, mocked her with the vilest and most contemptuous taunts.

This little Sodom, this miniature Gomorrah of Southern India, remained indifferent to the religion of Christianity, and continued in its hideous iniquity and its odious superstition, blind to the miracle accomplished in the Witch, deaf to her entreaties, and careless of her warnings.

A Salvationist who worked in the place at that time said to me, 'It was an immoral, bad village; our few converts were no credit to us; the people seemed incapable of spiritual birth; the whole thing was thoroughly unsatisfactory.' And yet, surely a light from heaven had shone into its darkness.

Some three years ago cholera appeared in this

village. Like an avenger from the outraged heavens, it swept away the ringleaders of evil, and filled the rest of the people with an agony of terror. In this condition of panic—a state which cannot be imagined by Europeans—they did not seek devil-dancers and they did not kneel to their idols, but once more they prostrated themselves before the Witch and implored her to supplicate her good and holy God on their behalf. It is a very remarkable and significant fact that these people, who were perfectly sincere in their superstitions, and genuinely contemptuous of Christianity, turned to the Christian God in the hour of their extremity.

The Witch bade them repent of their many and grievous sins, taught them to pray, and in the open village street, the rest kneeling beside her, besought God on their behalf. Her prayers, I am told, were of extraordinary beauty. She always began—her eyes raised to heaven and her arms uplifted—with the words, whispered in an imploring tenderness —'O God, You are my Father!—my *Father!*'

The scourge continued to afflict the village. Sixty deaths had occurred when she said to her husband, 'Let us leave this house and go into the fields, and build a gudisha.' So they went out, and built the little shelter, and by seven o'clock in the evening it was finished. She had prepared the evening meal, her husband and her son had eaten, when of a sudden she pressed her hand to her side and said, 'It has come to me! I believe I have got it!' No sooner were the words uttered than she was seized with convulsions, her limbs contracted, and she was gripped by an agony indescribably dreadful. In a few minutes she was lying stiff and full length upon the ground. The husband stooped down and touched her feet. 'They are cold,' he murmured, trembling

with fear; then he touched her limp hands: 'She is dead,' he whispered, getting on his feet; 'come, we cannot stop here.' Father and son, stricken with a great fear, moved away, and spent the night under a tree some quarter of a mile from the woman and the cholera.

Early in the morning, on his way to the village for a burying spade, the son, passing by his mother, looked at her, and saw that her eyes were open. He drew nearer, and said, 'I thought you were dead.' She motioned to him to come nearer still, and said with great eagerness: 'Go to our house, and in a pot tied to the roof you will find five rupees; bring them to me here.' The son went on this errand and returned with the money. 'Tie it up in my cloth,' said the woman, and when this was done she appeared to be at peace, and sank into a quiet sleep.

After several days she became quite well, and was able to work in the fields, to do her household duties, and help her neighbours. For six weeks she went about these duties, the money always tied up in the corner of her cloth.

Then came the Harvest Festival, when the Salvationists give what they can of their pice and annas, their rice and their dahl, for the conversion of India. The Witch was the first to rise with her offering, and her offering was the amazing sum of five rupees, which she took from a corner of her sari. She was asked how she came to give so liberally, and she told the following narrative.

When she had been deserted by husband and son —dimly conscious that she was deserted—a feeling of intense and most wretched loneliness overcame her senses, and she thought how bitter it was to die alone. The sun had set; the day stood at the gate of twilight waiting for the stars; over the sad earth,

gradually losing outline and colour, fell the grey shadow of impending darkness; on the air came to her a coldness, an indifference, an isolation. To die alone—how bitter and how hard! In the extremity of her weakness, from the depths of the swoon that held her soul, she sought despairingly for life and another sunrise. To live, to feel the morning light, and to see fellow-creatures, to be one of many in the sunshine of familiar earth—this became a hunger and thirst to the woman dying of cholera in the falling night, forsaken and alone.

'Then,' she tells, 'I thought to myself—I will pray to Jesus; and with the thought came the idea that I should promise Him an offering. I thought, "What can I give Him?" And I remembered that in a pot hung from the roof of my house were five rupees which I had saved towards buying a milk buffalo. I said to myself, "I will offer God these five rupees and ask Him not to let me die alone in the cold night." So I began to pray; but as I was praying I saw a vision, and forgot my prayer and my offering in the wonder of the vision. For I saw as clearly as if they had been real people, two Salvationists approaching me out of the shadows, and one of them came quite close to me and opened a Bible and began to read to me, and then he closed the Bible and knelt down at my side and prayed for me; afterwards he rose, whispered to the other, and looking back at me for a moment, disappeared into the darkness. As they passed out of sight I fell asleep, for the reading and prayer had given me peace, and I lay like that till morning. As soon as I woke I remembered the vision, and when my son came to me I sent him for the five rupees, and ever since then I kept them, waiting for the Harvest.'

The village is at this day almost entirely

Christian, and the former Witch is a transforming and redeeming power throughout that whole district. Whatever be the explanation of her possession, the story set down in this place is the deposition of a woman as holy and as powerful for righteousness as any female saint in the Roman Calendar.

DEVIL-PRIESTS

THE whole subject of demonology is full of difficulty for the student who is at once catholic in his research and unbiassed in his judgment by the easy verdicts of nineteenth century science. He naturally shrinks from the idea that invisible and disembodied entities haunt the earth seeking human tenements as means for expressing their passion and their lust. He knows that while the oldest of records bear witness to the existence of witches and that while the savage races of the earth still bow themselves in terror before a devil-possessed person, the evidence for such a mystery among civilized nations dwindles down to a few cases of more or less genuine mediums who professed to be 'controlled' in trance by spirits from another plane of existence. The great thesis of Frederic Myers does not solve the problem. The madhouses of Europe do not offer any intelligible explanation. He acknowledges that by far the greatest number of human beings still have affiance in devil-possession, but shelters himself against belief in any such irrational and distressing theory behind the solid testimony of enlightened and progressive nations that devil-possession does not occur.

And yet, in such a country as India, where the belief in devils is universal and where he may see

for himself many strange and shaking things among the devil-worshippers, the student must sometimes be tempted to believe that there is at least some Power in the universe definitely evil whose work in the world, however effected, is accomplished through human instruments. And he may be led by his inclination towards this belief, to wonder whether those numerous instances among civilized nations of rational men and women driven against their wills to alcoholism, to kleptomania, and to unaccountable violence, as well as those more multitudinous instances of men and women otherwise sane consciously yielding their wills to disfiguring vices, to brutalities towards children, and to the spiritual debasements of unintelligent vulgarity, are not in some way or another expressions of the activity of that same malevolent Power whose manifestations among savage people it is easier to define but not more easy to explain.

After many close and careful conversations with devil-worshippers in India, I find myself less inclined to dogmatize upon this subject than was the case with me a year ago. But I do feel at least certain of this, that it is as easy to find among civilized nations baffling instances of wills over-ridden by exterior Evil, as cases in India of demon-possession which to the victims themselves, even after the purifying and uplifting experience of Christianity, appear to be incapable of other explanation.

In the following narrations the reader will find ample evidence for believing that at least it is supremely hazardous for any human will to surrender itself to the idea of Evil—whether such a force has entity or not, and whether the surrender be definitely made or merely rest in a treacherous

inclination. With certainty we may say, in spite of brazen lungs raised in Europe against the decalogue and the moral code, that the path of evolving humanity is beset by no greater danger than the temptations towards anything which is not absolutely and strenuously good.

This man was not a devil-dancer, but a devil-priest. He is handsome in appearance, not unlike Tennyson. The long thick iron-grey hair is combed back from the head and curls outward from the nape of the neck: the moustache and beard are likewise iron-grey. In spite of a particularly black skin, the fine-cut features and the large eyes bring him closer to the European than is the case with many Indians of lighter complexions. He has a pleasant expression and the whole character of his face is one of a lofty spirituality. It was odd to see this noble-looking man sitting cross-legged on the floor of my rest-house at Nagercoil. He refused a chair, sat himself on the ground, and with hands folded in his lap, raised his eyes to mine and awaited questions. While we talked, lizards ran about the whitewashed walls, and from the dusty garden outside came the monotonous cry of the hoopoe.

He told me that his father had been a devil-dancer, but that he himself had begun life as an assistant in the temple raised to this devil's honour. The devil was a female named Ammon. Her worship is not so repulsive as that of the male devil Cholamarden, whose dancers in their loathsome frenzy eat the raw heart and steaming entrails of a pig in addition to drinking its blood; but the effect of her worship is disastrous to morality. Children of eight and nine years of age, he told me, are absolutely corrupt. Disease of a terrible nature ravages the whole country. 'I remember a boy,' he told me, 'who

once saw a caste girl going to market and dragged her off to the jungle; she was obliged to go to hospital, and she was only nine years of age; the boy was twenty. Do you wonder why Indians cling to their custom of early marriage? These child marriages relieve the parents' anxiety. Immorality is universal.'

In the temple of Ammon, he told me, there is an outer court to which people come with offerings of camphor, coco-nuts, plantains, rice, fried fish, and other things. The assistant takes these gifts and carries them into the inner court, where the priest offers them to the goddess. During this service in the 'holy of holies,' the people in the outer court give themselves up to the very vilest and most disgusting immoralities, using all the time the foulest language imaginable, and utterly abandoning themselves to an orgy of iniquity. It is implicitly believed that this orgy, so delightful and exciting to themselves, is pleasing to Ammon.

At harvest time the temple becomes a hell. For eight days the priest must remain in the darkness of the inner court and never go outside for any purpose whatever. Every family must contribute two rupees to the festival. The gifts of fruit, vegetables, and fish are afterwards divided among the people, who fill the outer court with the shrieks and yells of their maddened lust. The devil-dancers, excited by arrack and encouraged by tom-toms, hand-clappings, and shouts of applause, whirl themselves into a condition of anæsthesia in which burning oil does not blister the palms of their hands. Men, women, and children are driven mad by an ecstasy of faith in the physical power of their devil-goddess. To her they scream their hymns of praise, for her they fling themselves upon the ground, and

to give her—their protectress and providence—pleasure and amusement they commit a hundred lurid and filthy obscenities prompted by the whirling inspiration of the orgy.

As devil-priest, the man of whom I am writing received a double portion of all the gifts brought to the temple, and without labour of any kind he lived the proud and indolent life of a spiritual autocrat. It pleased him, he told me, to encounter Indian Christians and to taunt them with the power of his devil-goddess. He did not understand Christianity, but he knew that Christians worshipped some god or other whose mildness and feebleness caused him an infinite amusement. Could any of the Christians dance for hours, drink the blood of a dying pig, jump into a fire, or take burning oil of camphor into their hands? 'Your God,' he used to say contemptuously, 'is not so powerful as my goddess.'

He was not a drunkard, as so many worshippers of evil are, but he was given up to immoralities as much for their own satisfaction as out of deference to his goddess. It never once occurred to him all his life that there was anything in these practices either hateful or bad.

He was a grown man, married, and the father of a son, when an incident happened which altered the whole course of his life. He was alone in the temple one day, offering incense to his demon, when the noise of rolling drums outside diverted his attention from the altar. To see what the noise meant, he left his offerings on the mud table, passed into the outer court, and made his way to the door. As he came into the bright sunshine he saw a company of Indians dressed in a similar native dress, congregated at a corner of the street, with a flag in their centre, and a number of boys playing

drums round the lifted banner. He recognized them as a new force on the side of Christianity of whom people had lately been talking in those parts, a body of people, white and black, who called themselves Salvationists.

Out of curiosity the priest crossed the red dust of the road and stood with the crowd of amused neighbours who had now gathered round this fresh excitement in their lives. The drums ceased. The Salvationists sang a hymn which did not convey any definite idea to the devil-priest; and then one of their number, a native of high caste, began to speak. He talked about a God Who demanded from man, not sacrifices and not immoralities, but a cleansed heart and a soul determined to righteousness. He declared that this good and holy God had an enemy, and that the work of this enemy was evil. To please the good God, to secure His help and to enter His heaven, it was first of all necessary for a man to repent of his sins, to listen to the voice of his conscience, and to decide that henceforth he would commit no act and entertain no thought which the voice of his conscience declared to be either definitely wicked or unworthy of a child of God.

The devil-priest walked away with two new thoughts in his mind. He conceived the possibility of a God Who was perfectly good. He saw definitely that there was such a thing as sin.

'For many days,' he told me, 'I could not free myself from these new thoughts, which haunted me. I felt they were true. I did not doubt my former beliefs, but I felt that these two ideas of the Salvationists were true. A good God—and Sin, Sin which endangered the soul and made it impossible for it to be happy and safe after death. I

became afraid. I thought to myself, God may be more powerful than Ammon. God is a hater of sin. Ammon is a lover of sin. Goodness and Evil—those two; which is the stronger? I felt sure, though I cannot tell you how, that Goodness was stronger than Evil. For a whole month I fought a battle in my soul. I would go to the Salvationists at their meetings, hear what they said, and then return to my temple, and in the darkness of the altar struggle to think it out. Some of the officers would say to me—"Come and test our God; come and try Him; see if He is able to do what we say He can do." And although I had begun to long for a cleansed heart, and although I felt a great longing to be free of sin and different from what I was, I refused this challenge and remained a priest of Ammon—because I was afraid of her. At last, so strong was the longing for liberation, I determined to ask Ammon herself whether I should become a Christian or stay as her priest. I feared to try the Salvationists' God; I felt that it would be safer to get guidance from the goddess of my fathers. So one day, I offered incense to Ammon, prostrated myself before the altar, and besought her to tell me in a vision what I should do. I waited for hours. There was no vision; there was no sign. For the first time, out of a great necessity, I had sought help from my goddess, and she remained indifferent. I rose from my knees, and I said to myself, "There is no life in this goddess; why, then, should I serve her?" I went straight out of the temple, sought the Salvationists, and gave myself to God. What happened to me at that moment I cannot describe; I saw no bright light, I heard no voice, and I was not conscious of any unseen Presence at my side—but I felt that some wonderful Power had entered into me and

had completely changed me. I seemed all at once to be different from what I had been up to that very moment, and above everything else I felt happy in the love of a good and merciful God.'

This was in the year 1892. Ever since that day this once lazy and arrogant priest, subjected to frightful persecution from the Sudras, has earned his own living as a humble cultivator, has worked without pay for the Salvation Army, has given liberally to its funds, and has always devoted one day in every week—a great sacrifice to the struggling Indian—to worship of God and meditation on His way of liberation.

I asked him if he had ever experienced dreams of terror since his change of life, or seen visions which gave him strength and consolation.

'Devils have come many times,' he replied, quietly, 'to torment me in my dreams. I have never seen a vision from heaven. But I do not fear the devils. I am so sure of God. He has answered my prayers, and He has given me'—his face became lighted with a smile of happiness—'complete peace of heart.'

'Will you give me an instance of your answered prayer?'

'Very willingly. The cholera came to us, and my son was brought to the edge of death. No one thought he would recover. The doctor had given up hope. I prayed to God. I said, "He is my only son. Spare him a little longer and I will be thankful to Thee—so thankful, O my Father." God heard that cry. He saved my child.'

They told me that the father came to the next meeting of the Salvationists, and gave seven rupees as a thank-offering for this answered prayer.

Perhaps of all the converts from devil-worship to

Christianity none impressed me so much as the old and beautiful man known now over a wide district of Southern India as the Saint of Manady.

To see him is to feel an instant reverence; to speak with him, even through an interpreter, is to grow strangely and humbly fond of him. For in this tall old stooping man, thin as a lath and bowed with something more than years, one is conscious of a spirit awed into the wondering simplicity of childhood by communion with the Eternal. He is a saint, and a saint who has seen God. He does not seem to belong to the earth; he appears to have risen into a state of being which is higher than humanity. And yet there is in the large eyes and the shrinking body, something timorous and dog-like, as though a faith greater than anything demanded by religion has arrested and atrophied his reason. At one moment the soul kneels to him; at the next the intellect feels compassion for him.

Tall, thin, even emaciated, with mild and beautiful lips, eyes that are full of wonder, a brow ploughed with the deep furrows of solitude and meditation, this gracious and childlike patriarch of the Tamils shrinks from the world, covers his face with humility in approaching a European, and stoops to kiss the hand of those from whose race he has received the gift of God. Leaning on his long staff, naked save for his loin cloth, he reminded me of Ulysses returning beggared to the gates of Ithaca. The short, grey hair comes forward to the brow; the moustache and beard only just cover lip and chin; the mild eyes, eloquent of suffering and aspiration and visions, are habitually bent upon the dust; the ears stand away from the head; the neck is like a cord; the long, lean body, with the hollow breast and stooping knees, witnesses to suffering, patience, and

privation. I have never seen any man's gestures so beautiful and so entirely sincere as the awe-filled gestures of humility with which this wandering man of prayer greets and takes leave of a stranger.

He told me that he remembers quite well how his parents used to say, 'We must worship God.' He would go as a child to the river, bathe himself, and then entering a Hindu temple would say, 'God, God, God,'—not knowing what the word meant. Four vices marked his childhood—drinking, lying, stealing, and lust. He indulged in these vices while he obeyed all the ceremonial instructions of the priest. Religion was nothing but a form. He had not the smallest notion of a good God, was never told that his bad habits were sinful.

His first faith was in a devil. At the age of twenty-five or twenty-six he was appointed a priest in a temple devoted to propitiating twenty of these wicked gods. As priest his duty lay in guarding the vestments and vessels, the swords and bells, which were kept for festivals in the inner court of the temple; he it was who purified them with ceremonies and ashes and gave them to the devil-dancers in the outer court, which was always crowded on high days with an excited and evil-minded congregation. In the inner court were many idols and shrines; the people would bring for offerings to their idols, coco-nuts, plantains, flowers, oil, and incense; it was his business to pour the oil in lamps round the idols, to burn the incense, to place the flowers before the images, and after purifying the coco-nuts and plantains, to return them to the people with the statement that they had been accepted by the devil. Every Tuesday and Friday, people anxious to get children or to avert sickness would bring offerings to the temple.

He tells me that he believed in devils, but had no faith at all in these offerings and ceremonies. He was, if one may say so, a Blougram of Hinduism. In his village, as I have said, they acknowledged twenty devils, and the old saint of Manady lived at that time upon the superstition of the people. He was married and had four children; he was one of the leading men of the village and of the panchayat—a kind of village council; he possessed several buffaloes, owned a coco-nut grove, and had many fields under rice. It was a life as full of prosperity and authority as any Tamil could desire.

How he cannot explain, but gradually there grew in his mind the notion that his four vices—drinking, lying, stealing, and lust—were wrong. Nothing in his religion suggested this notion. The devils whom he served were themselves all given over to these four vices and to many others. He had never heard of a good God, and was utterly unacquainted with Christianity. Nevertheless, he came to feel in his heart of hearts that drinking, lying, stealing, and lust were wrong. He became aware of the difference between right and wrong; there was no regenerative process in his soul, only a distress and vague unrest at the growing certainty of this difference between acts which were right and acts which were wrong. He did not know in the least what to make of it.

I tried to get from him a clear statement of this change in his soul. I asked him whether he had not been told as a boy that vice was wrong. He was emphatic in his negative. I asked him if he had never heard of philosophic Hinduism, of Gautama's teaching of Christianity's demand for a clean heart. He assured me that never once in his life had he heard words of any kind which made a distinction between good and evil. On the

contrary, devil-worship had implanted in his mind the idea that excess and sin were pleasing to the invisible forces of nature. Up to the age of twenty, he told me, his mind was an utter blank as to anything good or evil; after twenty, devil-worship associated the idea of evil in his mind with the mystery of existence; and then, between the age of forty and fifty, unaccountably, from nowhere that his former life could indicate, came this idea of goodness, this strange and frightening idea that there was wrong in what he did because it opposed something that was different, something that was pure, something that was good.

He was in this disturbed state of mind, when his far-away village, ten miles even from Nagercoil, was visited by a party of Salvationists. When he first saw the red coats he was filled with fear, associating them with the Government! One of the Salvationists, a European, came to him and asked if they might pass the night in his coco-nut garden. Without thinking what he did, like a man in a dream, he gave the Salvationists the key of the place and left them.

At night he came from his house, and stood in the shadows of the trees, watching the Salvationists. The grove was flooded with moonlight. They had spread their blankets on the ground, had eaten their meal, and were now singing a hymn. The words were in Tamil, but he could not understand them. At the end of the hymn they kneeled down, and one of them began to pray. Drawn by curiosity, the devil-priest came out of the shadows and approached the group in the moonlight. He sat with them and they talked to him. It was confusion for his brain, this new religion of which they spoke so confidently. A good God was something he could

dimly comprehend; but the rest, what did it mean? How could it be squared with his experience of life? He returned to his house troubled and perplexed.

But he found pleasure in talking to these Salvationists, and for the eight days they rested in his garden he was constantly in their midst, and even attended some of the services that they held in the village. He used the phrase, 'I determined to be bolder,' when he spoke of going to their services. I asked him what it was that made him go. 'I found pleasure in their talk,' he replied.

At the end of the eighth day he began to experience the glory and joy of faith in a good God. 'I believed!' he exclaimed, raising his wondering eyes and lifting up his hands. 'A *living* God!' he whispered; 'a *living* God!' This faith came to him very quietly and without violence or shock of any kind. He described his feelings at that wonderful moment as a sensation of *lightness*. He said, 'My whole heart was filled with rejoicing.'

But this was only the first movement in his mind. He believed in God, in a *living* God, in a God Who was good.

At a public meeting held by the Salvationists in the village, he renounced idolatry and accepted the religion of Christianity.

The people of the village came about him, angry and expostulating, saying that he was subverting the true religion and would bring disaster on them and on himself. He replied that God was good, and he would pray to Him if evil threatened.

He placed himself in the hands of an Indian Christian, by name Devasigamony, now one of the ablest Salvationists in Southern India, and began to explore the inwardness of Christianity. From

faith in a living God, he moved to faith in an incarnate Christ. From faith in an incarnate Christ he moved to faith in His teaching. He believed in what Christ taught. Belief with him meant absolute certainty of conviction.

'And then,' he says, 'I saw the horror of my past and the mercy of the Christ Who had redeemed me by His love. I believed what He said, that to enter the Kingdom of Heaven a man must be born again. I knew that my sins would cling to me, in spite of my faith in a living God, unless I was converted and became as a little child. I saw, too, that it would be of little use for me to preach faith in a living God to my people, when what they needed was repentance of their sins and liberation through the love of Christ. I felt how true, how true, was this teaching of my Lord.'

So he went publicly to a second meeting of the Salvationists and there bowed himself down and prayed for the mystery of conversion. He rose up another man.

In the strange history of Christianity many have experienced in a moment of flooding light the mystery of a new birth, freeing them altogether from the thraldom of habitual sins and setting their feet in a new way of exalting joy; but few, I think, ever so profoundly experienced this great mystery as the old and withered Saint of Manady who then and there, from a man of many sins and a grasping avarice, became as a little child.

It was instantaneous this conversion, this utter transformation of character; and the Christian gift that he received from God at this font of new birth was an absolute faith in prayer. This is what marks him out from all other men I have ever met. His life is a continual prayer. He loves prayer. It is

not so much an activity of his soul as a world in which he moves and has his being.

From morning to night, on the road as he journeys, beneath the tree where he rests, in the houses he visits, and under the stars as he waits for sleep, always he is praying. Unable to read, he can do nothing but pray. And prayer fills him with unutterable happiness. As we spoke together, in the pauses that came as I questioned the interpreter, the old man would close his eyes, and the gentle lips would move in communion with God.

From the moment of his conversion he was subjected to persecution. His masters, the proud Sudras, attempted to reave his lands from him. The barber and the dhobi were forbidden to visit him—a deprivation terrible to a Hindu. His wife and his children opposed him. At this time, too, disaster overtook him. One after another his buffaloes died, and his crops failed. The people pointed at him as an object of hatred to their gods. Cholera appeared. Nine Salvationists died, and the devil-dancers announced that the cause of the cholera was the devil's anger against Christianity.

But still the old man held to his new faith. 'My disasters,' he says, 'only drew me nearer to God. They only made me feel my great need of Him.' The people sent to a hill-devil said to be more powerful than their own valley-devils, beseeching the hill-priest as a favour to send his devil that the Saint might be destroyed. A devil-dancer came bearing an enchantment. This enchantment consisted in a repetition of words, a curse upon the Saint and all that belonged to him. Strange to tell, the Saint's sister and her husband were stricken down with fever; but he went to them, rubbed water on their heads, prayed to God for them, and they

became well. The man who brought the enchantments died on the same day.

This strange event gave pause to his enemies. Some even felt an awe for him. He went to a woman who was very ill, prayed for her, and she became well. Another woman with no child came to him, he prayed, and a child was given to her. A man named Veeran, who is still living, returning from his week's work in the fields, became suddenly like a raving madman and then fell down in a dead faint; it was probably a case of sunstroke, but the people thought him dead, bound up his head in the usual way of preparing for his funeral, and were carrying him away when the Saint came to them, placed water on the man's head, and began to pray; the man sat up and asked for Kungi-water. There is another man still alive, who was in a dying state from some internal trouble, when the Saint came to him and raised him up to new life by prayer.

These events established his fame. But he shrank from living a life similar to that of a devil-dancer, and so, making over his house and lands to his eldest son, he turned holy man for Christ, and went out with only his staff and a worn Tamil Bible which he cannot read himself, to preach the liberation of Christianity and to pray for the Children of India.

He has made himself an outcast and a beggar for Christ. Throughout that part of the country, homeless and penniless he wanders from village to village, begging his food from the people, telling those who will hear him about a good God, and praying continually to his Christ. Sometimes he will be persuaded to stay for a few days in the house of a villager, sometimes a little crowd of people will follow him into the jungle, sometimes he will rest under a tree in some distant hamlet for as long as

a week, but chiefly he is seen, lonely and solitary, upon the road, his grey head bare to the sun, his emaciated body naked save for the white cloth about his loins, his feet shuffling slowly through the dust, the long worn staff of the pilgrim dragging in his right hand, the left hand nursing a faded and blistered Bible against his breast, his eyes bent upon the dust, his lips moving in prayer.

Some people come to him, seek him out, and question him. Others, following his Master's example, he calls to quiet conversation. At one time he called young men to follow him, but they replied, 'We have our work to do.' He says that men listen to him more readily than women. He thinks it is best that he should be alone.

I asked him if he had ever seen spirits or angels or visions since his conversion. He replied that he has seen many evil spirits walking about in the night. I asked again if he had ever seen angels. After a pause, his large wonder-full eyes becoming suddenly very solemn, he made answer: 'Sometimes I see Christ; close at my side: walking with me on my pilgrimage.'

Alone, solitary, and always uncertain of his next meal, this strange and beautiful old man has accomplished an extraordinary work for Christianity. He has not only been the means of definitely converting many men from heathenism, but he has shaken the faith of a whole vast district in devil-worship. It is true that people seldom send for him until soothsayers, witches, and devil-dancers have failed, but they do send for him at last, and the marvellous results attributed to his prayers have turned the hearts of many from the idea of Evil to the idea of Good. Even the Sudras, the proudest and most rigid caste in Southern India, send for him on

occasion. Not long ago, at a place called Poothapandy, a devil was said to have got possession of three men, who became suddenly frantic and dangerous, behaved like the demon-possessed in the New Testament, and were finally brought to a state of uncontrollable madness. The Saint of Manady went to them. On his arrival he found that one of the men was dead. He prayed to God in the house of the other two, and then commanded the devil to go out. Both men perfectly recovered. Such stories concerning him are innumerable.

Another story concerning a devil-priest will be sufficient to acquaint the reader with the nature of this demon-worship and the extreme difficulty encountered by Christianity in the deep-rooted traditionalism of the Indian peoples.

Masillamony of Vadasery is a tall and heavy old man, with a face that tells of long and arduous conflict of the soul. There is in the small and puckered eyes a look of weariness and unlifting sorrow; the tall forehead is bagged and overhanging with wrinkles: the mouth, just visible between white moustache and short beard, is depressed with something that is almost bitterness. He is laborious and slow, but there is in his face a look of masculine dignity; one feels in his presence the sense of power and authority.

At the age of nineteen he abandoned heathenism and surrendered to a Christian Mission which had lately sent emissaries to his village. In this village he was a man of considerable influence, and by his persuasions the entire community of a hundred families renounced idolatry and became Christians. The idols were destroyed; the temple was laid level with the dust.

Masillamony at the age of fourteen had married

a wife of nine. On the death of this wife he had married again. And now, soon after his conversion, the second wife dying, he proceeded to make arrangements for a third marriage. Now, he was headman of the village at this time, a man of unusual intelligence, and one of those personalities which are like a magic on the wills of other men. Such a person was worth marrying, and perhaps the fortunes of the village depended in no small measure on the character of his next wife. In any case, the pastor in charge of the Mission, a Native Christian, made up his mind that Masillamony should marry one of his relations. Masillamony, on the other hand, made up his mind that he would marry in quite another quarter. There was a dispute, a rupture, a feud, and at last open war. The pastor refused to perform the ceremony of this new marriage. Masillamony, with the help of his friends, performed the ceremony for himself, according to the Christian rites so far as he understood them.

There followed a tremendous upheaval in that little village. The Native pastor issued an edict fining every person who had attended this marriage, which he declared to be invalid. Masillamony in a towering passion hurled defiance at the pastor, and calling the people about him proposed that they should return to the worship of their fathers. Nearly the whole village followed his leadership.

On his threshing floor, which had been cleansed from idolatry, he set up the old swamis and rebuilt a temple to the sandal-wood goddess. He, the headman of the village, became priest and devil-dancer of this temple. He drank deeply of arrack to work himself up into terrible frenzies. 'Of course, I had to do it,' he says, 'or the people would have had no faith in me.' He declares that he himself had

no belief either in the goddess or the ceremonies. He was a priest for the sake of power and out of a spirit of revenge. But he confesses that the wild music and the frenzied dances bestowed upon him some unaccountable immunity from pain. Great pots of boiling water, into which turmeric and other things had been placed, were thrown over him as he danced, and he says that they seemed to him only like cold water.

He had never been grossly immoral himself, but the village was corrupt, and moral perversions of an odious character were common. He says that he never looked upon these things as sinful, but regarded them as shameful, and sought, by his power as headman, to put a stop to them. He tells me that he felt even as a youth that immorality was something unworthy of human nature.

I pressed him on the point of his faith in the goddess. 'I do not know,' he replied, 'whether I really believed in her or not. I felt that there was something true in the idea, and I knew that as priest I had opportunities for power over the people. It was for power that I performed the ceremonies of the temple. I wanted to be master.' 'But,' I asked again, 'did you ever think to yourself,—There is no such person as this sandal-wood goddess; there is no such thing as a devil-goddess at all?'

'I knew that there were evil spirits,' he said.

'How did you know?'

'There *are* evil spirits,' he replied, 'everybody knows that there are evil spirits.'

'Have you ever seen any?'

'No.'

'But you believe in them?'

'They have no power to do anything; but there are many evil spirits; I know it.'

'Have you ever seen visions of any kind?'

'Yes. I have had a vision. Once. It was not long ago. Three angels came to me. Two did not open their mouths, but one said to me, "Thirty-one people will die in this village." I asked, "Why should God so suddenly destroy the lives of all these people?" The same angel said, "The order has passed." The other two did not speak. Then they disappeared. In three days' time cholera came suddenly, and thirty-one people perished. No more than thirty-one. Exactly thirty-one. That is the only vision I have ever had.'

He told me that although he had never properly realized Christianity, he was haunted by the idea of Christ all through the long years of his devil-priesthood. He was wretched and unhappy. But pride kept him on his course. 'I was too proud to yield,' he said. 'The Mission sent a new pastor; they tried to get me back; but I laughed at them.'

One day a European Salvationist came to the village. He had heard of Masillamony, and going up to him, he took his hand, led him into the shade of a tree, and said, 'You must become a Christian.' They remained sitting and talking under the tree for more than an hour. At the end of this conference Masillamony said, 'If ever I become a Christian again, it will be as a Salvationist.'

He told me that he felt his heart softened by this colloquy under the tree, and that ever afterwards he was haunted by it, knowing himself to lack something, to be incomplete, to be untrue. Altogether he remained a devil-priest for thirty-eight years after the rupture with the Mission, and all those years were dogged for him by wretchedness and the haunting of a great lack in his life.

Towards the end of this long misery there came

to him a Native Salvationist, one Sena Putra, a saintly man as simple as a child, wistful in his methods, and tranquil in his faith. The two would sit together in the gloom of Masillamony's mud house with the fine porch of carved wood and the granary above the living room. Masillamony used to laugh at him. 'Why,' he would say, banteringly, 'I know the Bible better than you do!' And Sena Putra, being too gentle and too humble to contradict or even doubt the boast, would reply, 'Then that is another reason why you should surrender to God.'

On the one side of this controversy was a masterful old man, serving idols, given to devil-dancing, and tenacious of his authority in the village; on the other, as meek a disciple of Christ as ever found joy in surrender to the will of God. The one man was unhappy, uncertain, unrestful; the other, happy, certain, restful. The one man had intelligence and power; the other, nothing but the sweetness of a spirit dwelling continually in the blissful region of faith.

It was the saint who conquered in this contest. He said nothing to persuade the old priest, triumphed over him never once in argument, and was many times dumb before the Scriptural onslaught of his powerful antagonist. But he possessed the secret. In his face there was neither storm nor vexation, in his voice there was neither trouble nor perplexity. He spoke of Sin as something that separated the heart of man from God, and of Christ as the Saviour Who sets free the heart of man from all the fetters and barriers of Sin. He spoke of Liberation—of the freedom of a heart cleansed from evil and so set upon goodness that it becomes the dwelling-place of God. He said that religion gave

peace to the brain and joy to the heart. He said—'To be born again is to be at rest.'

The other man, dwelling in the shadows of his dark house, or going down to his rice-fields, or entering the temple of his goddess, was haunted by the knowledge that he lacked peace. He said to himself—'This goddess gives me nothing.' He said to himself—'I was a Christian once, but I did not understand.' He would sit by himself wondering if he could yet be born again. 'If I would be a Christian' he thought, 'it is certainly necessary to be born again.'

Then, so insistent at his heart was the longing for liberation, he said—'I will seek God'; and he felt himself even with the resolution at the door of a new life. No more idol-worship, no more service of the devil, no more darkness, uncertainty, and fear. He came out from his dark house, passed down the curving street of mud-houses, and presented himself before Sena Putra. 'Take me,' he said; 'I know now what I want to be—I know, too, what these people must become.'

Such was the power of his personality that the whole village came over with him to Christianity.

Some months after a little ceremony was made of handing over to Fakir Singh as head of the Salvationists in India the temple in which Masillamony had served as priest.

I was present at the strange scene. From the crowded town of Nagercoil, where the Hindus can still prevent any European from walking down their streets at a time of festival, came a procession of Salvationists, winding with the dusty and uneven road to the little village of East Vadasery. Their band was playing and their banner caught the flames of the setting sun. On the faces of the men

there was a look of triumph and amusement; the young women—so wonderfully, so amazingly different from the poor wretched women still living in the degradation of Hinduism—marched with a self-conscious joy. Every now and then this bright and happy procession, with which were marching several European Salvationists, would lift their voices and sing to the band in melodious Tamil a hymn to the Christian God. People who came to their doors, or who stood at street corners to watch them pass, gazed with something very like pride at the smart and splendid young men of the band and the handsome vigorous girls marching with their tambourines and smiling as they went. It was as if the India of to-day was watching the India of to-morrow.

East Vadasery lies off the main road, some little way beyond the large hospital of the Salvation Army. You leave the broad, tree-sheltered road, and crossing an old bridge, follow a narrow lane which curves like a serpent between hedges of cactus and fields of rice till it ends abruptly in a street of mud-houses—low palm-roofed buildings red-brown in colour and flush with the lane. At the end of the street, where it widens and ends in a wall with a stile descending to the rice-fields, and under the beautiful shadows of a huge tree, stands the little temple—a pitiful enough structure, but with something pleasing and picturesque in its low-reaching roof and its quasi-tower over the altar of the goddess.

As the procession, filling the whole street, which was decorated with paper flags of many colours, advanced to the open space before the temple, I saw old people peering out at it from the dark interiors of the little houses, like animals afraid.

At the temple the Salvationists sang a hymn in Tamil, which went to a tune of triumph and contained the lines: 'We have been worshippers of false gods; Let us now take up the Cross; Soldiers of Jesus!' Old Masillamony stood in front of Fakir Singh, careworn and anxious it seemed to me, watching the face of this great Guru, and holding in his hands the handsome iron key of the temple.

Beyond this congregation stretched a wide landscape of green rice-fields, in the distance a wooden-railed bridge over the canal, and farther away still purple mountains misty and soft in the glory of the setting sun. Men and women were at work in the fields. Above them, in the quiet beauty of the skies, wheeled a great kite—one of those birds in whom the Hindus see an incarnation of Krishna.

Masillamony's son read an address, in which Fakir Singh was invited to take possession of the temple and make it a place of Christian worship. Then the old man stretched out his hand, the Fakir took the key, and people pressed forward to enter the abode of the goddess.

It was dark inside, so dark that people struck matches. There was no furniture of any kind. The walls were not decorated. In the outer court was something that served as an idol. Beyond, where the steps led to the altar, three or four clumsy shapes of mud represented all the forces of devil-worship—making their last stand against the reason of man and the conscience of righteousness.

The little lights twinkled in the darkness and gloom of the temple. Voices sounded everywhere. Crowbars began to break up altar and idols with a dull thudding noise. The foul air became suffocating with their dust.

I made my escape from the scene, and went to visit the house of Masillamony—the house from which he has ruled the village through a long lifetime, and the house in which he sat for so many months in conflict with Sena Putra. I wanted to see that interior more than the idols he had served without faith.

Over the door was a handsome porch with carved pillars, the wood blistered, cracked, and unpainted. The door itself was heavy and strong, with a handsome handle. Inside one found a large and gloomy room, to which light entered from a door at the back, on the step of which some shabby fowls were waiting for food. A rough ladder-like flight of stairs led from the floor of trodden clay to a loft above. There was no chair in the room, no table, and no bed. In one of the corners lay a reed mat where the old man slept; near the stairs stood three or four barrels containing grain; at the back of the room several brass vessels, brightly polished, were ranged upon the floor.

It was like a barn save for its extreme cleanness and some subtle sense of humanity which haunted the dark air. One could not think of it as a man's house. There was in it nothing either of comfort or disorder. As the byre or stable or sty of some ascetic dwelling in unbroken solitude with the thoughts of his own soul, one could understand the strange and throttled humanity of this sombre place. But one could not feel that a woman had ever lived there, that love had been glad there, that children had ever played on its earthen floor or made the mud walls re-echo with their play.

I climbed the ladder-like stairs to the apartment above. It was a swept and garnished loft crowded with barrels of grain. It was there, in the dim

light and under the hot roof, that one realized the wealth of the proprietor. These innumerable tubs and barrels filled to the top with the fruits of the earth, represented a European's bank, a miser's gold and a collector's treasures. They were wealth and security. Let the sun scorch the earth, let the rains destroy the crops, let Governments fall, let the bourses of the civilized nations send ruin to the ends of the earth, let calamity succeed calamity—and still, here there would be wealth and security.

When I came out from the dwelling all the idols were demolished, and a look of relief had appeared in the puckered eyes of Masillamony. He was surrounded by talkative villagers, and with one hand at the bunch of white hair on his chest, the fingers of the other fidgeting with the considerable waist of his loin cloth, the fat and bearded old man was listening with troubled patience to these chatterers, as I have seen the late Lord Salisbury lending an unwilling ear to the inquisitive and too pushful lesser members of his party. But the look of anxiety was gone. There was satisfaction in the small mouth and the light of laughter in the eyes.

RESPECTABLE HINDUISM

Among the men I met in Southern India was a little droll creature in gold-rimmed spectacles, whose protruding and widespread teeth under a ragged moustache shone with the same light of cheerful good spirits as glittered in his happy eyes. The whole face was a-shine with amusement. One could not sit in his company without smiling. Everything in the universe seemed to move his mirth. And he was eager in his talk, quick in his movements, and delighted with all he said—like a child at a party. I never knew the real meaning of the word *chuckle* till I got into conversation with this little parcel of human cheerfulness.

He came of a high-caste family, and was well acquainted with Hinduism. It occurred to me that a born humorist might be able to furnish a more intelligible account of this perplexing religion than some of the philosophers whose tedious works on the subject had often exasperated me by their contradictions and confusions. So I asked him if he would tell me all about Hinduism, respectable, orthodox, high-caste, and non-devil-dancing Hinduism, just as he would tell an Indian all about Christianity—easily, conversationally, and holding only to the main points.

At this he burst out laughing, hugged his knees

as he sat on the floor, and pressing his protruding teeth upon his brown under-lip regarded me with a satisfied delight.

'It will make you laugh!' he exclaimed.

'To begin with——?'

'Oh, the beginning is funny. It is ridiculous. The beginning is Brahma. Brahma is the god of gods, but—he is never worshipped! There is not a single temple erected to Brahma, and not a single Hindu ever prays to him. Do you know why? Well, it 's a funny story. Hinduism begins with three gods—Brahma, Siva, and Vishnu. Those are the three from whom the other three hundred million gods have all descended. One day Brahma and Vishnu had an argument. They couldn't decide, these two gods, which was the taller. Of course they got warm on the subject. Brahma said he could give young Vishnu a head; Vishnu retorted that he could beat old Brahma by a couple of heads and fling in three necks and four pairs of shoulders—so there! Something like that. In any case the dispute got so hot that they determined to make an end of it. They agreed that one should go up into the mountain of creation, and the other down, and he would be the taller god who first came to the end of things. Brahma elected to go up, and turned himself into a bird. Vishnu said he would go down, and converted himself into a pig. Very well. One—two—three, OFF! Away they went. Vishnu began to pant and to blow. "Pouf!" he says; "I can't stand this any longer; a little of this goes a long way," he says, and back he comes. Brahma flew up and up, but he got tired. He wished creation wasn't quite so big or his wings weren't quite so heavy. "My eye!" he says, "but the world 's bigger than I thought it was." For forty years the

brave old fellow kept it up, but he got sicker and sicker, his eyes could scarcely keep open, and his wings began to moult—flying machines weren't invented in those days. Just when he was nearly done, he saw a flower falling towards him, and asked it where it came from. "Don't talk to me," said the flower; "I come from the top of Siva's head; I've been falling for years; and I'm dreadfully tired." That 's what the flower said. Brahma glanced up, and thought to himself, "This isn't good enough," and he said to the flower, "Look here, will you tell Vishnu that I have seen the top of the hills?" "Anything you like," said the flower. And down they both went together. When he saw them, Vishnu asked, "Have you been to the very top?" "Yes," said Brahma. "Has he?" asked Vishnu. "He has," said the flower. "Then I've lost," said Vishnu; "but, at the same time—hullo! what 's that?" They all sprang up in alarm. Fire leaped out of the earth; Siva descended in a rage—and oh, how he cursed that flower, and oh, how he rated Brahma, and oh, how Vishnu chuckled with delight! That 's the story of the Hindu trinity. The Brahma of Brahmanism, because he told a lie, is never worshipped and is not permitted to have a single temple; the North of India worships Vishnu, and the South of India worships Siva—and as for the flower—the wild apple flower—it is never used in temple worship. You will see it in a girl's hair, but never on a Hindu altar. It told a lie!'

'Is there jealousy,' I asked, 'between the followers of Vishnu and the followers of Siva?'

'The most religious of them,' he replied, with a chuckle, 'quarrel like cat and dog.'

'But the others——'

'No, they don't quarrel: at least, they aren't at it morning and night. But each thinks the other is wrong. They have different temples, and different ceremonies. They do not mix together.'

'Which is the better?'

'Neither! Both are bad.'

'In what way?'

'Oh, bad.'

'Are they both sensual in their form of worship?'

He nodded his head.

'The priests?'

'Ninety-five out of every hundred,' he said, 'are immoral. Five in every hundred are good men.'

'Tell me about the ceremonies.'

'There's no preaching to begin with,' he replied. 'I was a Sivite for twenty-eight years and I never once heard a sermon and never once heard a priest teach morality. Never once in twenty-eight years! The people pray their own prayers, and the priest burns lights and camphor before the idols. Incense is never used for high-caste gods—only for demons. The temple girls—you know what they are, I suppose!—posture, and dance, and sing. The people pray, and these girls in fine dresses and covered with jewels, sing their songs, writhe with their bodies, and wave their arms in the air.'

'Are the words of their songs indecent?'

'No; oh, no! They are called *The Garlands of God,* and are songs of praise. They contain such sentiments as—"I will worship thee: the only god! I will praise thee, and give thanks to thee. Thou hast created me, fed me, and wilt take care of me." It's different from the singing of the devil-dancers: but—well, the girls are there only for one purpose. The priests don't keep them to praise god when they're old! There are some ugly scenes in these

temples. Every day, morning and evening, and sometimes midday, the priest performs his ceremony at the altar. The girls remain in the outer court. No one else is present. Then he comes down from the altar and enters the outer court carrying the gods' rice to the girls. They crowd round him, laughing, and pushing, and jesting. Well, you can imagine the rest. Horrible places! They never have any windows. They are practically air-tight. Where the god dwells it is pitch dark and suffocating. Oh, you wouldn't like one of those temples!'

I asked him about the nature of the prayers prayed by the genuine worshippers.

'Hindu people of the better class,' he said, 'are not immoral in their prayers, but they only kneel for material blessings. They go to get something out of their god. It is wonderful how many of them believe in idolatry. They polish their gods, feed them, cover them up, fan the flies away, and would rather injure themselves than one of their idols. They fear what Siva may do to them. They don't want to be better people. Prayer means, "Don't hurt me," or "Please give me something nice." They're funny people!'

'Now, in a few words, what do these people believe?'

'Hinduism is just this—belief in reincarnation and aspiration after non-existence. Everybody believes that a person must be born seven times, as grass, plants, trees, insects, birds, animals, men; afterwards, that a person will go on being born until he is fit to inhabit the body of a Brahman. Then—well, of course, there's nothing else—heaven! And heaven is a ceasing of the individual life in the universal consciousness of the god.'

'But there are bad Brahmans?'

'A bad Brahman has to be born again. According to the nature of his sin, so he must descend and begin the climb once more till he is fit to be a Brahman.'

'That is the faith of Hinduism?'

'If I was to tell you about the philosophy—— '

'No, we will leave that.'

'What I have told you is what the people believe. It is the religion of India.'

'Now, tell me what are the commands of this religion. What does it tell a man he must not do?'

'It tells a man,' he replied, with another chuckle, 'that it is shameful—

To walk with his wife in the street.
To eat with his wife in the house.
To shave himself.
To eat in the presence of a European.
To touch a person of lower caste.
To let a low-caste person enter his house.
To permit his wife to sit while he is standing.

These things are universally condemned.'

'And what does it command a man to do?'

'In morality, nothing. No; it only tells a man how he must wash, what he must say when he is doing this and that, and—well, other ceremonial things. There is no moral teaching at all. Not a bit. Not a scrap. It is generally believed that the holiest man is one who lives an existence of privation and commits no sin; in some of the sacred books there are moral ideas; five in every hundred of the priests are virtuous men; but Hinduism, the religion of the Indian peoples, does not lift a little finger either to save the sinner or to make men better. That isn't its business. I assure you, Hinduism is something which never yet helped a

man, a woman, or a child. It has plunged millions into dreadful sins, and millions more it has driven mad. But helped us—no! Oh, dear, no!'

He explained to me that the Sivites paint three horizontal bars of white upon the forehead, and the Vishnuites two upright bars of white with a red one dividing them. The two white bars stand for Vishnu's feet and the red represents his wife. The Hindu placing these bars on his forehead says, 'I bear thee and thy wife on my brows.' Concerning the red spot worn between the eyes he told the following legend with great gusto:—

'Siva and his wife Parvati were one day playing a game of marbles. In the middle of the game she asked, "Who are the sun and moon?" He replied, "They are my eyes." "What!" she cries; "do you mean to tell me that if I close both your eyes the whole universe will be dark?" "I do, indeed," he answered. "May I try?" "Certainly." She lifted her hands and placed them over her husband's eyes. Instantly the whole universe became dark. In this appalling darkness all the people of the earth stood still and cried to Siva for help. The cry touched his heart. Between the two hands of Mrs. Siva there appeared a light, burning and glowing in the centre of Siva's forehead. The little red spot worn by Hindus all over India commemorates that merciful event.'

'But,' I asked, 'what became of the marbles?'

He laughed and hugged his knees. 'They dropped out of the story,' he replied.

THE LAUNDRY OF SOULS

At a sweeping curve of the river Ganges, rising from an earthen cliff high above the swerving water, stands the sacred city of Benares—its palaces and temples, its pinnacles and cupolas, its minarets and spires crowding with flashing gilt, garish paint, and fluttering flags into the perfect blue of a pure heaven.

The bank, on which this wonderful city stands with so superb a beauty, gives its complexion to the river and its spirit to the place. It is in colour like the bottom of a pond dried and cracked by the sun, a pallid brown that it is almost grey. Without the solid richness of mud or the innumerable vivacity of sand, it has a worn, shabby, and melancholy look—as torpid as putty, as lifeless as stucco. One is not conscious in this crumbling cliff either of the vigour of endurance or of the energy for catastrophe: it will not stand stubborn and unshaken for a thousand years, nor will it suddenly be blown away in a cloud of glittering dust. It impresses one with the sense of a subsidence which is perpetual but laborious—a mouldering down, and a crumbling away, so gradual that the cliff will never perish, and yet so continual that it will be for ever falling.

Benares is of the very stuff of this earthen cliff on which it stands aspiring to the blue of the sky

and subsiding to the mud of the river. In spite of painted buildings, brazen domes, coloured towers, and glittering balconies; in spite of the green foliage of pipal, neem, and tamarind trees which lift themselves above square roofs or thrust their branches between the walls of the crowding architecture—in spite of all this colour and ornamentation, the prevailing tone of the sacred city is a dull pallid and lifeless brown. The traveller looks up from the painted barge on which he is moving slowly with the tide, and sees above him an immense and far-spreading cluster of earth-coloured walls; and it seems to him that these walls, piled one above the other, have been moulded out of the inland cliff itself, that they are as dry and arid as the baked earth out of which they rise, and that like that cracked and mouldering earth they are crumbling everlastingly away into the dust of ruin. It is a blistered and a withered city, a city of melancholy and exhaustion, a dry, thirsty, and suffocating city —a city which is like a mummy.

And yet this shabby and dilapidated city, because of its humanity, presents to the eye a picture of extraordinary brightness. The wide and splendid stairs leading down to the river's edge are thronged with thousands of pilgrims dressed in all the gorgeous colours of the sun. The carved and glittering balconies shine with a raiment so resplendent that one imagines a king to be lodged in every house. The landing-stages, with their poles reflecting sunlight, are packed with a vast company who seem to be the actors in some glorious pageant waiting to march forth with flags and music. Even the muddy river, for the entire length of the congregating walls, is thick with worshippers up to the waists in water, and the brown and yellow and black and

chocolate skins of these thousand devotees, sparkling with wet, add colour and vivacity to the general scene. Moreover the pure air twinkles and thrills with the flight of swallows, the ledges and sills of the houses are heavy with pigeons, on the stages and on the stairs cows white as milk chew the cud of many-coloured flowers, and up from the burning ghâts where their dead are given to the flame ascends the blue and silver smoke of the Hindu's fire of wood, beautiful and glad. All is colour, movement, and life. The very water which worshippers fling in adoration to the sun forgets the mud of the river and becomes the glittering dust of diamonds. The pallid brown of the city walls swims into the lucent blue of the sky. And all the foulness and melancholy, all the dilapidation and ruin, all the squalor and shabbiness of the holy city is transmuted into the beauty and the wonder of some dazzling dream by the glowing magic of the sun.

The scene suggests the festivity of a fair. Along the edge of the river one sees huge umbrellas of bamboo at every possible angle, and a glittering confusion of little temporary buildings which are something like a tent, something like a bathing-machine, and something like a market-stall. Here the excited and chattering pilgrims disrobe for the river, kneel to innumerable idols, wring out their clothes, rub themselves dry, and laugh with their friends. All round these picturesque shanties and leaning umbrellas are the drying garments of the worshippers, hanging their lovely colours from rope stretched between two slender poles. Among the crowding people move the fruit-sellers with their red oranges and yellow melons, the dusty snake-charmers with their shabby boxes of innocuous cobras, the indolent sellers of sweets with their

trays of coloured sugar hung from their necks, the huge and herculean wrestlers, the emaciated and filthy saint, the creeping touts of the dancing girls, the bhisti with his dripping goatskin of water, and jugglers, acrobats, and singers—all of them variously dressed and variously noisy. The air is filled with a clamour which drowns the roucou of the pigeons. It is a cheerful noise—the noise of a fair in which everybody is pleased with himself. The faces of the multitude gleam with joy—white teeth and brilliant eyes making a sunshine of their own. You hear a constant obbligato of happy laughter to the glee of human merriment made by a thousand voices. It is a jolly scene. It is like a French watering-place crowded with holiday-makers from Paris. People are where they have longed to be. The goal is reached; the sun is shining; and life is good. The painted barges and little boats crowding the river are filled with pleasure-makers.

But in the midst of all this contagious jollity, there are scenes which strike horror and pity at the heart of the traveller. He sees the dying boy, with ghastly rolling eyes and shrivelled limbs, being carried down to the healing river by his brothers and his friends. He sees the corpse, wound in a pretty, flimsy robe and borne on a slight stretcher between slender poles of bamboo, waiting for the wood to be piled up for its burning. He sees on the top of a great flight of stairs, under the shadow of a lofty arch, the disconsolate widow wailing her loss and rocking herself to and fro in the arms of her comforters. He sees the sweating and gasping son swing back his long pole to break the skull of his dead father before the flames shall burst it. He sees little groups of all but naked men shovelling

into the muddy river the blackened ashes of the dead. And he sees loathsome humanity exhibiting its deformities and its diseases to the afflicted and distressed, whining for money at one moment, and cursing the refusal of it at the next.

The juxtaposition of festivity and lamentation is what chiefly strikes the observer. The shriek of the dying mingles with the cajoleries of the conjuror, the wail of the widow mingles with the loud laughter of a group gathered round an acrobat, the crackle of the death fire mingles with the music of love songs. He looks from a miserable leper to see a gymnast swinging his Indian clubs in the sun. He looks from the smoke and ash of the burning ghât to see children in gaudy clothes playing with tinselled toys. And while the stairs and landing-stages are crowded with all this sorrow and with all this joy, in the water itself, telling their beads, looking up to heaven with a strange ecstasy, or standing like carven figures with bowed head, folded hands, and moving lips, the pilgrims are praying to their gods and seeking liberation from their sins.

In the water, which is littered as if with confetti by millions of flower petals offered to Mother Ganges, you may see men standing at prayer who startle you by their likeness to the pictures of Christ—eyes large, luminous, and tranquil, the features perfect, the long hair falling gracefully about the neck, the moustache and beard leaving the tenderness of the mouth unhidden—the whole face exquisite with meekness and majestic with spirit. And side by side with these ascetics, you see the hard old man of handsome but sensual appearance, whose copper-coloured skin, stretched and shining over rolls of hanging fat, flames in the

sun with the challenge of wealth and power. Such a man scoops up the muddy water in his hollowed palm and rubs it on his shoulders, down his arms, and over his enormous bosom, with the action of one who is doing good business and would do it briskly and heartily. Another man, thin, bitter, and bird-like, the cords of his neck taut as steel, his shaven head like a skull, strides into the river with set and earnest face, flings the water up into the air with an angry flourish of the arms, and seems to regard the gods with stern displeasure or a masterful contempt. Another man, whose bulbous eyes and full lips suggest a sense of humour, comes tardily and self-consciously into the crowded river, and drawing a deep breath and pinching his nose between thumb and index, suddenly bobs his head under the tide and comes up gasping and dripping and relieved. Some stand praying, some lift handfuls of water to the sky, some are rubbing themselves with vigour, some are sitting up to the neck, some are jumping up and down like bathers at the sea, some are kneeling offering fruit and flowers to the river, some are shouting jokes to their friends on shore, and some are lying comatose and dreadful at the water's edge while their fathers and mothers anoint them from the sacred tide. Old white-haired men, middle-aged men, mere striplings, and little boys—their skins witnessing to vastly different climates and their features proclaiming vastly different castes—an immense and never-dwindling congregation of humanity—there they are waist deep in Mother Ganges, seeking communion with the powers of the universe and a lifting of the burden of their conscious wrong.

Just above these pilgrims, close to the place where the dead are burning and the place where wood is

being busily chopped for the death fires, there is a temple guarded by a staring notice-board which declares in English that women are not admitted to its precincts. The exterior of this temple consists of wood carvings, and every one of the pictures carved in the black wood is a grinning obscenity. It is not possible even to hint at the nature of some of these sexual lubricities, but the reader must take my word for it that they are filthy to a degree unreached in the worst pornographic literature of Europe, that motherhood is debased in some of them so vilely that it might seem a devil had done the work, and that in every one of these abominable impurities there is a salacious leer and a lecherous grin. And this place is a temple. As I moved away I noticed, at right angles from the temple, a line of buildings with iron railings in the place of windows and doors, like the cages in a menagery. 'That,' said my guide, 'is the priests' quarter.' I looked into one of the cages and saw a woman sitting in the shadow of the background. 'She is the woman of one of the priests,' said my guide. At the head of the stairs leading down to the river we were confronted by an old and frowning man whose forbidding face reminded me of certain criminals I have seen in Wormwood Scrubs. He held out his hand, angrily and commandingly. 'What does he want?' I asked. 'Bakshish,' said my guide. 'But what has he done?' 'He is the priest.' I gave him nothing, and he cursed me in mumbled language and with murderous looks.

As we descended I said to my guide, who was a young Brahman and spoke excellent English—'How is it possible for such a temple to stand in the holy city of Hinduism?' 'I am sorry to say,' he replied sadly, 'that there are worse things than

that in Benares. I do not like to tell visitors the truth, because it brings shame to my religion. But in this little city there are two hundred dancing girls, and the people are very wicked—they are not good. It is wrong. It should not be. It is not our religion.' 'But,' I persisted, 'that temple is not a secret sin: it is a place of worship; it is open to all the world; it is served by priests!' 'There are too many priests in Benares; some of them are very wicked,' he answered. 'But this temple—does no one condemn it? is there no such thing in Benares as a public opinion? What I want to understand, do you see, is the unchallenged existence of such a place, served by priests, in the sacredest city of India—the city to which pilgrims come thousands of miles from every quarter of the country, to rid themselves of just those very sins which this temple is erected to excite and justify. I cannot understand how it is allowed to stand.' 'There are many things like that.' 'But the pilgrims—the people we saw praying in the river and bathing in the holy water: they are in earnest, they are not hypocrites, they are struggling to be good, they want to be better?' 'Oh, yes, a few may come because their parents desire it or because the priests have ordered it; but most of them are seeking liberation.' 'And they say nothing about this temple?' He shrugged his shoulders—'They do not bother about it; and—they are afraid of the priests.' 'They know that many of the priests are wicked?' 'Everybody knows that!' 'But it makes no difference to their faith?' 'No; they believe their religion.' Now, imagine such a temple as this at Oxford or Winchester or Wells. But there it stands—in the centre of Benares, unchallenged, and guarded by priests.

The interior of the city is scarcely less crowded than the riverside, but in all else wholly different. Instead of the infinite blue of heaven, the happy sense of moving water, and the wide, clean, wholesome air of unbroken distance, one finds oneself in dark and tortuous streets whose huddled houses, from their littered gutters to their overhanging balconies, reek of dilapidation and breathe decay. The ground floors of these grimy dwellings are used for merchandise, and there one sees, framed by the blackened woodwork of the shop front, the grinding of flour, the hammering of brass, the roasting of gram, the carving of wood, the stitching of raiment, the weighing of meat, and the forging of iron. One interior is bright with the tinted sugar of the confectioner or the gleaming trays and vases of the brassworker: another is dark and miserable with rusty iron and broken shards. In one shop, smoking an enormous hookah, and clothed in spotless white, the rich and corpulent merchant lounges against his carpets or his furniture; next door, with ragged garments and sweating arms, the lean and haggard master works painfully beside his crucible of fire. From a shabby window overhead issues the monotonous but haunting melancholy of the tom-tom, the sad twang of the zither, and the rhythmic beating of hands, with a woman's raucous voice breaking every now and then into this wailful music in a nasal crescendo of discordant passion. The trodden earth or the uneven stones of the roadway scarcely show for the garbage; the shops and cellars reek like rabbit hutches; from wall to wall the street is crowded with an indolent and spitting multitude; and everywhere —buzzing in the dark air above the people's heads, almost obliterating the meat and sugar and grain in the shops, and assaulting your face and neck and

hands as you force your way through the stench and the crowd—there are flies.

It is impossible for any picture or any photograph to convey a faithful idea of an Indian city. Two essential and ubiquitous components they must always lack, however skilful the painter, however accurate the lens. One thing is the glittering blackness of a cloud of flies; the other—dust. The flies make an atmosphere of their own, and it is in this atmosphere that a street of native houses looms into vision; it is an atmosphere as depressing and suffocating as fog and yet as vivacious and quivering as the atmosphere of a summer sea. It is an atmosphere that vibrates with vitality, that shines and glitters with incessant movement, and yet chokes the soul with a sense of loathing and disgust. The tired and yawning dealer squatting on the counter of his little grimy shop will every now and then lazily fan the marauding flies from his evil-smelling fish or his raw and bloody meat; and then they rise into the air like a cloud of coal-dust, swarm there for a moment with a sickening buzz, and then descend once more upon their prey—some of them settling on the owner's face till it loses recognition, covered by a spotted veil. The string of mules descending the declivity of these steaming streets is accompanied by a host of flies; the bullock-carts, loaded with unspeakable things, are black with them; the diseased, the wounded and the ulcerous are pursued by them and speckled with them—the very houses seem to throb and pulsate with the mist beaten by these hundred million wings. Until one has seen with his own eyes the black dance of the buzzing fly in the bazaar of an Indian city, it is impossible for him to visualize that crowding scene or imagine that offensive air.

With the flies there is the dust. So far as I know dust is a thing no painter can counterfeit, and no camera can reproduce. I mean the dust of architecture—not the clean, sweet, transitory dust of the open road or the windy field—but the old, sour, black, and abiding dust of mouldering stone and crumbling brick, the dust which settles upon ledge and sill, which works its way into the flutings of carved wood, which is the pigment and complexion of ancient stone, which mantles blistering wood and peeling paint, which is the black rime on the toothed arches of dark entries, which is the leaden bloom on rusty lamps and hooded porticoes, which is the mildew in doorways and the must on rotten stairs—the dust of time, the dust of decay, the dust of death.

How should a painter, baffled by the specks of damp gold on a child's sandshoe, express this shabbying dust of bitten stone and nibbled brick which clothes the habitations of men with the vesture of mortality? And yet, is it not this common and unpaintable dust which breathes into the air of cities the mysterious atmosphere of architecture?—is it not this grime of the ages, this crumbling away of magnificence and strength, which gives to a temple, a palace, or a street its character and significance? A painter may suggest age and may suggest decay, but apparently he cannot clothe his picture with this covering and tangible garment of ancient time. And a photograph of a building old as Rameses, lacking only this vesture of dust, becomes as contemporary as a town hall or a free library.

I have been surprised, looking through the photographs which I brought back with me from India, by the utter failure of the camera to give even the very faintest sense of a city's atmosphere—that something on the walls of buildings and in the air of

streets which is what we receive into the mind long before we have begun minutely to observe or critically to particularize. It is not only that a photograph lacks colour; it is not only that a photograph is unnatural with arrested movement—the air is lacking, the character is wanting, and the soul is dead. ''Tis Greece, but living Greece no more.'

In all the cities of India, but chiefly in Benares, a sense of the crumbling dust of time, shabbying everything and saddening everything, is essential to a faithful apprehension of the scene. The vivid colours of the people's clothes and the garish paint on the woodwork of the houses, are seen through a mist breathing from this everlasting dust. And it is in the air—suffocating the nostrils, irritating the throat, and inflaming the eyes of the unacclimatized European. It is in the air, like motes in a shaft of sunlight; it falls from the roof, it ascends from the road, it comes from the rumbling wheels and swaying pole of the bullock-waggon, from the pack on the laden ass, from the dark interiors of smith and turner, from the rustle of feet padding on the stones, and from the windows, doorways, and balconies of the nodding houses. It is the living breath of the living city.

One thing more is essential to a faithful realization of these Indian streets. In addition to the breathing atmosphere of dust and the myriad dance of disgustful flies, there is the heavy, pungent, and narcotic smell of the East. If you can imagine what the air would be like in a shop built of sandal-wood and stocked with fish, where dirty carpets were being beaten and chests of greasy brass loaded with *pot-pourri,* you will be able to realize the floating scents and drifting odours of a Native street.

Benares is perhaps more remarkable for its dust and smells than any other city in India. For in addition to its never ceasing tide of pilgrims, it is a city of innumerable temples, and many of these temples are nothing more than stables for cows, cages for monkeys, hospitals for the sick, and common lodging-houses for the destitute. You may look through a gorgeous temple door of shining brass into the dusk and reek of a stifling interior, and see in the mephitic gloom a monstrous bull snuffing at trays piled with rose-petals while his worshippers crowd about him in the slime and steam of his ordure. You may enter the precincts of another temple, and find every foot of your progress challenged by chattering monkeys who grab at your hands or snatch at your clothes for the food which is offered to the gods. And elsewhere, in narrow slums, through burrowing alleys, and at filthy corners, you will come across dark and sinister temples whose tanks of horrible water are surrounded by the scrofulous and the leprous, while the broken and spittled stones of their pavements are strewn with humanity eating its food, uttering its gossip, and sleeping away the fatigue of its pilgrimage. The smells, the dust, the dirt, the flies, of these dark and twisting streets, make such an atmosphere as fill the mind of a European with loathing and disgust.

But of all cities I have visited, Benares stands in solitary supremacy for interest and illumination. I do not think there can be another place in the world where a man may see the soul of humanity so visibly. Other cities amuse or charm; Benares teaches. Other cities show us the social organism; Benares, the individual soul. In a single hour, making a loitering journey from the temples to the

riverside, a man may learn something of the human soul which all the books of the world have failed to teach him. He may come to a knowledge of the human mind which he has not realized even from a profound study of *The Golden Bough* and *Human Personality*. For here, visible to the eye of sense, crowding every street, thronging every stair, and muddying a great river, is the soul of man seeking rest from the burden of its own particularity, and, in that immemorial quest after peace, descending to such outrageous folly and such degrading absurdities as stagger the brain of a rational man and fill his mind for a moment either with compassion or wild contempt for his own species.

Again and again I said to myself, looking at these pilgrims abandoned to their orgiastic ritual, 'Religion is a degradation.' Again and again I felt that Faith is a peril and a stumbling-block to the evolution of humanity. And long after I had escaped from the dust and the flies, the smells and the slime, of this sacred city, I was haunted by the repetition of this single thought—*the mind must act as if there is no God.*

For the supreme lesson taught by Benares is the danger of unreasoning Faith. Among these pilgrims there are those who sincerely believe in God, they come to the Ganges with the passionate desire to be cleansed from sin, they ardently hold the faith that God will give them peace at the end of this religious observance; and, if faith in God is pleasing to God, if aspiration after cleanness is a true prayer to a heaven which answers prayer, then, they should be, these earnest and passionate pilgrims, as dear to the heart of God and as secure in peace of soul, as the faithful Catholics and Protestants of Europe. But for myself, I found it

impossible to think that any infinite and perfect Being could take pleasure in such servile abasement and such childish superstition; and I felt that if heaven must make choice between these children who have degraded reason, and men of science who have exalted reason, it would be no heaven that opened its gates to the children.

Benares gives to one the absolute certainty that the evolution of humanity depends upon reason. The exercise of this faculty is of course essential to the human race, but if Faith attempts to usurp the chief place in human progress, disaster must overtake humanity. The most devout Christian does surely act as if there were no God in moments of peril and catastrophe. If his house is on fire, he does not pray, but sends for the fire-engine. If his child is bitten by a mad dog, he does not pray, but runs for the doctor. If his eyes are failing, he does not pray, but consults the oculist. If his children are many and his income precarious, he does not pray, but insures his life. Pressed to an honest confession, the most earnest and trustful Christian is forced to admit that his material life is ordered far more by the exercise of his rational faculties than by his faith. And if any man can read history with honest eyes, must he not perceive that until superstitious faith in an over-ruling and constantly interfering Providence was supplanted by the masculine resolution to manage *this world* with human hands, to manage it and rule it by the ingenuity and might of human reason, life was a sad and wasteful and cruel business.

It is the *divine* gift of Reason which differentiates mankind from the animal world; and wherever Faith is ascendant over Reason, humanity is degraded to the brute level. Nor does even the true Faith serve

God and Man when it maligns Reason for lack of its own quality, since no one acquainted with the slow and laborious ascent of humanity, measured by millions of years, from magic and sorcery, from cannibalism, totemism, barbarism and idolatry, can doubt that Reason has ever been the morning star of the human race leading the soul upward and onward from a false and partial to a true and comprehensive knowledge of the Universe. Reason is never at a stop, and therefore it can never formulate a creed. Always it is moving towards fuller knowledge of the cosmic process; and with every painful step of its advance it reveals a more majestic universe and fills the soul with a deeper and sublimer reverence. If Reason is accused of lack of Faith—by those who participate in its thousand achievements—may it not justly answer that to work is to pray, and that to believe in the perfecting of things is to believe in God?

Certainly the faith which is in Hinduism is a faith perilous to humanity. To see a man standing in the muddy river of Benares, rubbing himself with the filthy water, and to reflect that such a man—who would surely be better employed in stoking a railway-engine or ploughing a field—is convinced in his brain that the depravity of his heart is thereby washed away, and that he is giving pleasure to Eternal God—this is to feel that a faith which commands a surrender of reason is more deadly to the human race than the blankest agnosticism or the wildest atheism. An agnostic such as Huxley is surely a nobler, nay a diviner, representative of humanity than these pilgrims to the Ganges. And the priests of the cow temple or the monkey temple, though they offer sacrifices all day to the invisible gods, surely they are more dangerous to

the human race than the frothiest atheist of a London park.

One sees in this city not only the peril of faith, but the inevitable calamity of mysticism carried to its logical conclusion. The fakirs, who so trust God that they take no thought for the morrow, and are content with the day when they have begged sufficient rice for stomach's need, are no whit different from the loose-lipped and rolling-eyed inmates of our mad-houses. Their faith is so supreme that their reasons have atrophied. They are stupid. They are mad. Let any ascetic-minded youth, steeped in the literature of the saints, and inclined to the belief that God may be reached through privation of body and by meditation of soul, come to the banks of the Ganges and cleanse himself of folly. He will there see men who do what so many mystics have enjoined, and who have become in the process dehumanized skeletons and poor jibbering idiots.*

But chiefly, Benares must be regarded as a laundry of souls. From all parts of India, packed like bundles of firewood in trains composed of interminable luggage vans, riding down from the hills, footing it over dusty roads, jolting along in bullock-waggons and palanquins, the mother carrying her baby, the friends supporting their sick, and the mourners bearing their dying, millions of Hindus, from the great Rajahs to the most destitute peasants, stream in a never-ceasing tide through the streets of the holy city, descend the steep and broken stairs to the filthy river, and there, with exclamations of joy and smiles of esctasy, wash the foul linen of their dirty minds or their troubled souls. Look at it how you will, unless you are rickety with senti-

* See Notes, page 343

mentalism or fanatical with hatred of reason, there is little but contempt and disgust in this spectacle of Hindu holiness. You see humanity degraded and grovelling; you see it laughing with the joy of satisfaction in its own shameful degradation; you see it—this humanity formed for heroic deeds and capable of divinest intuitions—grinning in an abasement to which the lowest brute and the meanest insect have not fallen. And in face of all this public and laughing riot of faith, you cannot ride away from the horror of it on the tolerance that it is merely the outward and visible form of some inward and spiritual emotion; you cannot soothe yourself with the flattery that you have a penetrating and an understanding soul because you see in all this hideous ceremonial only the mystery and symbolism of a spiritual tragedy. It is too public: it is too literal: it is too honest. No; there is nothing of symbolism in this spectacle. Ganges water is sacred and holy. It is to this water, this very water flowing muddily before your eyes, that your symbolists have brought their sinful souls, their aching sick, and their corrupting dead. It is Ganges water, not any power that it symbolizes, which will wash away sin, cure lepers, and carry the souls of the dead into Paradise. Look at them, these holiday-making pilgrims, as they crowd and fight into their homeward trains or take to the road on their return journey; in almost every case you will see that they carry bottles and jars and pots filled with this holy water. The Ganges symbolizes nothing; it is itself the laundry of souls, the hospital for disease, and the channel to Paradise. They take this sacred water back with them to their distant villages, and when they commit a sin they touch themselves with it, and when their children are sick

they anoint them with it, and when they would placate a demon they offer him a drink of it. For them there is no symbolism but a most potent magic in this water. They regard their pilgrimage not as a sacrament, but as a cure. Benares is not their Zion; it is their Marienbad.

One only feeling is possible to the just man who surveys this scene and can master his disgust and bridle his contempt and can overcome his shame. It is a feeling of pity.

Once more we realize that the Children of India are still in the infancy of humanity; and, smiling at those who would exalt Hinduism to the pure region of Philosophy or would bring it into any comparison with the sublime religion of Jesus, we watch the Ganges carrying down to the sea the rose-petals of the pilgrims and the ashes of the dead, and feel for the millions of India, still living in the darkness of superstition and the shadow of priest-craft, a sorrowful compassion—the compassion of a grown man for a child terrified by ghost stories and afraid of the dark.

But while it is impossible to regard this bathing of the multitude in Mother Ganges as an act of symbolism, it is nevertheless important to perceive that the people are driven to the magic of the river by a real and immemorial spiritual compulsion; and a consideration of the nature of this compulsion will conduct us from the crumbling earthen cliff of Benares to the arena of collision where the spirit of the East is at grips with the spirit of the West.

THE COLLISION

There are people in Europe who appear to think that the theory of reincarnation has a Hindu origin; and there are others, less ignorant, who attribute the first glimmerings of this idea to the mind of Pythagoras or to the soul of Plato. The truth is that far more than a mere notion of this transmigration of souls, rather a fundamental and unquestioning belief in the doctrine, existed among savage and barbarous people at the very beginning of time. Indeed, one may almost venture to assume that the first and earliest belief regarding the spiritual world held by those dim and shadowy races who swim like ghosts in the mist and mirk preceding the classical era, and whose vigorous descendants are still to be found in various unhandselled places on the globe long after the documents of the classical era have become yellowed with age, was the assured conviction that the traveller returns from the bourne of death and miserably haunts the inhospitable earth until a new body be born for his habitation.

It seems, for instance, that the ancient and widespread practice of circumcision may have had its origin in this belief, for among races at the present day the severed skin is carefully hidden in some secret place known only to the boy or his parents,

so that his spirit after death may find in it the nucleus as it were of another body. The shedding of blood in human sacrifices may also have had its spring in this same intuition, for there are barbarous tribes in many quarters of the world who still pour blood upon the bodies of their dead in the belief that it will strengthen departed spirits to find new bodies. In any case, on the authority of Dr. J. G. Frazer, we know that among all the Central Australian tribes 'the belief is firmly rooted that the human soul undergoes an endless series of reincarnations, the living men and women of one generation being nothing but the spirits of their ancestors come to life again, and destined to be themselves reborn in the persons of their descendants.'

So that, far from being the fine flower of Hindu occultism, this notion of metempsychosis or transmigration of the soul, whether it be true or not—is a survival from the black night of human history—a dream or a nightmare born to those tragic ancestors of every disease and every superstition, Terror and Ignorance. Terror was the first bridegroom, and Ignorance the first bride, and from this Adam and Eve of humanity, with many another credulous and affrighted offspring, came the infant Reincarnation, no doubt muling and puking in his nurse's arms.

Now, it is important to realize the remote antiquity of this notion, because it is the base and foundation of philosophic Hinduism. And it should also be borne in mind that, although the evidence is conclusive for the notion of reincarnation being prehistoric and absolutely savage, there is no dogmatic mention of it in Hindu literature till the post-Vedic period, when with the Upanishads—'commences that great

wail of sorrow which, for countless ages, has in India been rising up to heaven, and which, as time goes on, will deepen into the darkness of despair.' Apparently the doctrine was not developed, certainly not taught, till one of the later Sastras, and it is taught, as a writer has been careful to point out to intelligent Indians, in a book which teaches a quite mad geography, a most fantastical astronomy, and makes an absolute Alice-in-Wonderland of the serene and majestic unity of nature. Therefore, we find at the base of Hinduism, which attempts to masquerade before Europe as a profound philosophy and an esoteric psychology, a belated enunciation of the prehistoric belief in transmigration, and we discover that this 'divine' revelation was made by a very ignorant and preposterous person.

Until we apprehend the Indian's attitude towards this notion of reincarnation we cannot realize either the spirit of Hinduism or the nature of the great conflict now proceeding between the religion of Christianity and the religion of Brahmanism. It will therefore be worth while to consider exactly what the doctrine of transmigration means to the Hindu, and to clear our minds of any whimsicalities on the subject gathered from the lucubrations of European theosophists. The doctrine has been explained by one writer in the following illustration:—

> We are bound to our existence by two chains, the one a golden chain and the other an iron chain. The golden chain is virtue, and the iron chain is vice. We perform virtuous actions and we must exist in order to receive their reward; we perform vicious actions, and we must exist in order to receive their punishment. The golden chain is pleasanter than the iron one, but both are

fetters, and from both should we seek to free our spirit.

Another writer has expressed himself as follows:—

> The being who is still subject to birth may at one time sport in the beautiful garden of a heavenly world, and at another be cut to a thousand pieces in hell; at one time he may be one of the highest gods and at another a degraded outcast; at one time he may feed on ambrosia and at another he may have molten lead poured down his throat. Alternately he may repose on a couch with the gods and writhe on a bed of red-hot iron; become wild with pleasure and then mad with pain; sit on the throne of the gods and then be impaled with hungry dogs around.

'Transmigration,' as Monier Williams truly says, 'is the great bugbear, the terrible nightmare and daymare of Indian philosophers and metaphysicians. All their efforts are directed to getting rid of this oppressive scare. The question is not, What is truth? Nor is it the soul's desire to be released from the burden of sin. The one engrossing problem is, How is a man to break this iron chain of repeated existences? How is he to shake off all personality?'

Ask a Hindu, says Dr. Robson, what is the chief end of man's existence, and he will answer Liberation. This is the answer which will be given alike by the peasant and the philosopher of any of the Schools. Ask him what he means by Liberation, and he will say that it is 'to cut short the eighty-four'—meaning the 84 lakhs of births through which the soul may possibly pass on its journey to absorption into unconscious spirit.

There is absolutely no suggestion in the Hindu doctrine of transmigration, no hint of any kind, that the spirit may ascend on the stair of being by virtuous actions and spiritual hungerings into the presence of a loving and desirous Heaven-Father. It is no stair for them, leading either upward or downward, but a blank and awful cul-de-sac ending in annihilation. They refrain from good actions for fear of being born again to receive their rewards, and they refrain from bad actions only for fear of being born again to receive their punishments. Good actions are only superior to bad actions because they entail reward instead of punishment. And bad actions are not so serious as good actions because the priest has provided the means of purification.

The pilgrims whom we saw bathing in Ganges River were driven there, as was said at the conclusion of the last chapter, by a spiritual compulsion, and although the goal in view is not the Paradise of God but the unconsciousness of annihilation, the root of the compulsion, I feel sure, is one and the same with the clamour of the Christian soul, instinctive in all the races of mankind, for conversion and new birth. It is significant that the Christ's idea of palingenesis, or new birth, should have its origin in that universal unrest of the human spirit which the Hindu philosopher seeks to medicine with cessation from birth. And here we come into that tumultuous arena where Christianity and Brahmanism are wrestling for the soul of India.

Among all the races of mankind there exists the consciousness of something wrong in life. The poet Horace and the poet Job are here of one mind with the aborigines of Australia; the youngest

disciple of the philosopher Nietzsche would here find himself in agreement with the most ignorant Kikuyu of East Africa. Whether a man looks upon the universe as a roaring piece of anonymous machinery or sees in it the beautiful and evolving creation of a gracious Providence, he comes sooner or later to the melancholy conclusion that man is born to sorrow as the sparks fly upward. Not all the burly confidence of Walt Whitman, not all the studied gallantry of Louis Stevenson, can dry the universal tears or drown the universal sighs of our suffering humanity. 'For the world,' says Sir Thomas Browne, 'I count it not an Inn, but an Hospital; and a place not to live, but to die in.' 'The supreme and mysterious Power,' says Winwood Reade, 'by whom the universe has been created, and by whom it has been appointed to run its course under fixed and invariable law; that awful One to whom it is profanity to pray, of whom it is idle and irreverent to argue and debate, of whom we should never presume to think save with humility and awe; that Unknown God has ordained that mankind should be elevated by misfortune, and that happiness should grow out of misery and pain. I give to universal history a strange but true title—*The Martyrdom of Man*. In each generation the human race has been tortured that their children might profit by their woes. Our own prosperity is founded on the agonies of the past. Is it therefore unjust that we also should suffer for the benefit of those who are to come?' Always there is a hope of something better, always there is a vision of some Promised Land ahead, always we await the spark from heaven—but the Present is full of disappointment and distress.

Yes, we await it!—but it still delays,
And then we suffer! and amongst us one,
Who most has suffered, takes dejectedly
His seat upon the intellectual throne;
  And all his sad experience he
    Lays bare of wretched days;
Tells us his misery's birth and growth and signs,
And how the dying spark of hope was fed,
And how the breast was soothed, and how the head,
And all his hourly varied anodynes.

'Misery,' cries the Hindu, 'always accompanies existence. All modes of existence result from desire. There is no escape from existence except by destruction of desire.'

The conviction that life is sad, that whatever a man may think, do, or believe, misery will assuredly dog his footsteps from the cradle to the death fire, weighs so oppressively on the mind of the Indian convinced of reincarnation that he can see nothing but wisdom in the self-inflicted tortures of the fakir and will himself go to extraordinary lengths for the purpose of abbreviating the sentence of his personality. A fakir will sit with clenched hands till the nails grow through the palms and protrude like a bird's claws from the backs; or he will hold an arm above his head until it becomes a withered and a rigid stump. And the ordinary Hindu will perform monotonous ceremonies, offer food to idols, make pilgrimage to sacred rivers and sacred shrines, shave his head, cover his brow with ashes, paint his chest and arms, and even eat the excrement of the cow, rather than imperil his chance of a short cut to everlasting oblivion. At the base of all his thought concerning life and the universe, is the conviction that existence is sorrowful.

Now, a man would think that to a people so plunged in the abyss of misery, so sunken in the

slough of despond, so overshadowed by the dark mountain of despair, the good news of the Christ would sound as a trumpet. Think of the words:—

I am come that they might have Life and that they might have it more abundantly.
He that cometh unto Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in Me shall never thirst.
Come unto Me all ye that are weary and heavy-laden.
I am the Light of the World.
These words have I spoken unto you that My Joy might remain in you, and that your Joy might be full.

Think of the revelation that God is a Father, that this Father so cares for humanity that the very hairs of our heads are numbered, that He desires no ceaseless sacrifice and no monotonous ceremonial, but only the love of our hearts; and that, loving mankind as a father loves his children, He has prepared for those who respond to this love with the simple love of their human hearts, a Kingdom of everlasting joy and felicity.

Does it not seem to us that such wonderful and shining good-news would be hailed with a shout of thanksgiving by these millions of self-torturing souls afraid of death and afraid of birth?

Why is it, then, that the Darkness of Asia withstands and repels the Light of the World?

The answer to this question, if fully given, would lead us far from India and carry us into the stifling atmosphere of European theology, where Italian priests, German scholars, French philosophers and English moralists are still shattering the peace of Galilee in their struggle for the Keys of Peter. But the answer must be given if only in brief, and

fortunately the truth of it is so reasonable and apparent that it can almost be compressed into an epigram.

Christianity is rejected by Brahmanism not as the noblest thesis of Optimism, but as an inferior thesis of Pessimism. Brahmanism considers, and justly, that its own ancient philosophy of Pessimism is superior to Clericalism's modern philosophy of Pessimism. It has no knowledge of Christianity as the gospel of Optimism. It rejects not the Heaven-Father of Jesus, but the hostile God of the priest Who must be propitiated and conciliated. It rejects not the love of God Who asks only for the love of His children, but the capricious arbitrariness of a God Who has made the immense hazards of heaven and hell to turn upon intellectual assent to a set of theological dogmas.

The answer to our question, Why does the Darkness of Asia withstand and repel the Light of the World? is another question—Does Christianity, in Europe or in Asia, represent Jesus as the Light of the World?—is it a religion of joy or a religion of sorrow?

I think the reader will perceive what I mean if I compare for a moment the attitude of Jesus towards Prayer with the attitude of a priestly Clericalism. Jesus taught that God knows our needs before we express them, and that like a father He delights to give us what we need for our bodies and our souls. 'When ye pray,' said the Master, 'use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him. . . . Consider the lilies of the field . . . if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day

is and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? . . . for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.' Now, compare this wonderfully beautiful and reasonable idea of a Father-Creator, mindful of His Earth Children, with the priest's attitude towards a far-off and estranged God constantly demanding sacrifice and entreaty.

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.
Son of God: we beseech Thee to hear us.
O Lamb of God: that takest away the sins of the world
Grant us Thy peace.
O Lamb of God: that takest away the sins of the world;
Have mercy upon us.
O Christ, hear us;
Lord, have mercy upon us;
Christ, have mercy upon us;
Lord, have mercy upon us.

This comparison, which must strike every free and honest mind, is characteristic of the difference between the purely spiritual religion of Jesus and the entirely priestly religion of Clericalism. And the priestly religion of Clericalism, ceasing to be simple childlike faith in a Heaven-Father, has ceased to be good-news, has ceased to be Optimism. It has become not a shining path of peace leading to everlasting happiness, but a hard and difficult bridge over the imminent and yawning pit of everlasting misery. It has become not a message of hope, confidence, and good cheer, but a threat, a menace, an intimidation. 'This is the Catholic Faith: which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved.'

Hinduism, with no vision of 'Joy in widest com-

monalty spread,' and with no feeling that 'for life to be fruitful, life must be felt as a blessing,' stands at the altar of its ancient sacrifice and defends it against the cavalry of a new priestcraft and the infantry of a new altar, with all the proud courage and defiance of the French Guards at Waterloo. Pessimism confronts Pessimism. The old sacrifice withstands the new sacrifice. Priestcraft defies Priestcraft. Magic meets Magic. I believe that the contempt of an educated Brahman for this sacrificial Christianity is as honest and severe as the contempt of a European man of science for the dispensations and indulgences of the Latin Church. He feels that an ultimate God whose right hand guards the door of heaven as vigorously as the left swings wide the gates of hell, is inferior to his own notion of a universal substance indifferent to our trivial world. He feels that a Creator who continually needs to be implored for mercy and forgiveness, while he is himself responsible for the appetites and inclinations of his creatures, a Creator who would infallibly have plunged the uncountable millions of the human race into an everlasting furnace of torture and remorse but for the sacrifice of his Son, who being omnipotent and omniscient, made the world, repented of making it, and in his foreknowledge saw the eternal misery of legions of immortal souls in spite of his plan for mending the original scheme of things—such a Creator is felt by the educated Brahman to be inferior, infinitely inferior, to a Being wrapped in eternal slumber and careless of mankind.

And yet the missionaries of the Roman Catholic Church and our own painstaking Ritualists—many of them very noble and devoted men—are making converts in certain districts of India, and the sacri-

fice offered by the Brahman priest is exchanged for the sacrifice offered by the Italian or the English priest. This is not surprising when it is borne in mind that the conversions occur among the lowest peoples and the most depressed classes of India, human beings so savage that the prehistoric notion of a blood-sacrifice, even the practice of blood drinking as a religious ceremony, presents no difficulty to their primitive minds. Indeed, it is among the most barbarous people, and only among the most barbarous, that we should naturally look for any adherents to the perishing ecclesiasticism of a heathen Christianity; nay, we might expect these depressed and ignorant millions to enroll themselves as such Christians by millions and tens of millions, since not only are many of its ceremonies analogous with their own, but Brahmanism so despises them that they are kept outside the pale of orthodox Hinduism, and thus are priest-seekers without a priest, and sheep without a shepherd, even in wolf's clothing.

But among educated Brahmans this sacrificial Christianity is making no progress at all, and there are no signs whatever of any victory in the future. However ingenious and temporizing the clerical casuist, however many the new words imported into his theology to explain the inconsistences of his ecclesiastical documents, however adroit his annotations of Church history, the Brahman rejects his clumsy Pessimism with a senatorial disdain, and continues to sacrifice to the venerable gods of India, fortified by this controversy in the ancient and time-honoured desire of his ancestors for non-existence.

The methods of the various missionaries differ in various ways, and some are happily so freed from the detestable and savage notion of a magic and

sacrificing priesthood as to be almost as Christian as another Christian could wish. Such a man as Fakir Singh, and many more humble Salvationists gathered to India from all parts of Europe, while they make no criticism whatever on the missionaries and level no attack at all against Hinduism, force upon the Native mind by the simplicity of their lives and the beauty of their teaching, a notion of Christianity which sets it high above the tragedy of Hinduism. In pages yet to come the reader of this book will see how a simple insistence upon the good-news and the liberation of Christianity is slowly permeating the minds of Indians even in the higher castes; and I shall rely more upon these narratives of conversion than on my own advocacy to forward the belief of which I am most thoroughly convinced that to Christianize India we must first of all Christianize our Christianity.

But for the present moment it remains to point out that the unrest in India is not truly political but religious, and that its roots are buried in that immemorial pessimism of Asia which we have seen to be the base and foundation of Hinduism. Spiritual unrest is the true arena of controversy, and it is over the weary body of this unrest that Brahmanism and Christianity are wrestling for the soul of India.

Education has shaken the faith of millions of people in the superstitions of Hinduism. There are almost as many sceptics and agnostics in the schools and colleges of India as in the universities of France and Germany. But whereas the agnostic in Europe, rises with relief from his moribund ecclesiasticism to live what he would consider the full and exciting life of an optimistic materialist, the young sceptic of Bombay, Calcutta and Lahore rises only from

his idols and his ceremonies, and continues in the enervating and will-paralysing climate of India a pessimist convinced that misery accompanies existence. That is to say, he casts off the religion of Hinduism but not its philosophy. Imagine the unrest and dreary aimlessness of such a mind. Is it not in this spirit that the decadents of modern Europe—

> Who hesitate and falter life away,
> And lose to-morrow the ground won to-day,

go to their ruin? No faith in God, and a conviction that life is a meaningless martyrdom!—what can be the worth of such a personality, and what its end? Certainly for the Indian, so childlike and leaning, such a condition is perilous beyond the power of words to express. He loses the support of authority, he strips himself of tradition, and naked to the storms of adversity and the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, he stands repeating his Miserere of Pessimism to the unheeding stars and the silence of eternity. Better for him if he could still believe that there is peace in Ganges water and magic in the Brahman's charm, better if he could still paint his forehead with the sign of Vishnu or Siva and go to the temple with his offering of fruit and flowers, better, far better, if he could still believe that the universe is congregated with the powers of good and evil contending for his spirit —anything rather than this paralysis of will, this emptiness of the heart, this death of the soul.

Unrest!—do not I pray you think of Indian unrest as a new school in politics or a new form of treason, these things are but the untimely fruit of the Asian Igdrasil, whose roots strike deep into the past of Man and whose branches stretch upwards

to the sky of his dim future. The unrest of India is the shaken idol and the troubled priest, it is the torn mantra and the broken thread. All through the history of India, as indeed, all through the history of every nation under the sun, there has been this ground-swell of disquiet and unrest, this hidden tide of travail and disenchantment. The world has never been quiescent and humanity has never stood still. Always the earth has been sweeping through the fields of light, and always humanity has been moving from the darkness of its ignorance and out of the shadow of its inexperience, into new knowledge and new uncertainty. The long past behind us, where so many have marched and so few have bivouac'd, is strewn with the dust of witchcraft, the ashes of idols, and the bones of slaughtered gods. It is a road still wet with the blood of martyrs and the tears of disillusion. Hope and a sublime confidence have carried the kings of humanity ahead of the race and they have sung to men of kingdoms in nature so wide and majestic that it is an ecstasy to breathe that heavenly air; but always there have been mourners at the broken altar and always dim multitudes of the human race have loitered round the shrine deserted by its god.

The present agnosticism in India has been widened by education, but its origin belongs to Christianity. The missionaries of the Christian religion have done a work in India only comparable with the achievement of the first apostles in Europe. They have not converted Brahmanism into Christianity, but they have begun the Christianization of Brahmanism. They have not changed the altar of the gods into the altar of Jehovah, but they have erected over that altar the decalogue of Christian morals. In a word, they have lifted up in the empire

of superstition and idolatry, the ethical ideal of civilization which is the Character of Jesus.

This is not merely a conviction from my own observation and studies, but the settled opinion of the first minds now directing the Government of India. I find that every man in a high and responsible position, in a position which enables him to survey the whole various field of Indian life as it is manifesting itself over his own province, holds the opinion that a revolution of a most significant character is now taking place in Indian thought, and that this revolution is the work of Christianity. There are those who think that this revolution is all for the good of India, others who regard it with misgiving; but not a single man I consulted of all those able to form a correct judgment, expressed any doubt whatever as to the reality and enormous importance of the revolution.

Christianity, had it come with the good news of Optimism, had it been a united and happy Christianity, not a discordant, quarrelling and melancholy Christianity, might now be able to declare an extraordinary triumph; for it came, remember, to a people weary with pessimism, restless with ignorance, and degraded by oppression. It came, too, under the protection of a Government, almost wearing the uniform of that Government, which had opened the barred doors of Asian isolation to the stirring music of European liberty and the vigorous light of European knowledge. The untouchable classes found themselves protected from tyranny, the peasant found his surly fields mysteriously watered and abundantly fertilized by the science of the Sahib, the pilgrim found himself borne swiftly and wonderfully to Benares by the magic of the white man's steam-engine, the poorest

and the humblest slave of all those wondering millions knew that if any robbed or injured him the Sahib would execute justice; and, above all, the young man found a new world opening to his eyes in the book which the great White Mother taught him how to read.

With its message of Liberation, to a people seeking Liberation as the one object of existence; with its gift of joy to a people all but dehumanized by melancholy; with its assurance of life, and life more abundantly, to a people wearing out existence in a quest after death—what might not Christianity have done for the soul of India wakening from its sleep of the ages? But Christianity came as a priest, and encountered a priest. It came as a pessimism and encountered a pessimism. It stood at an altar, and an altar withstood it. A single God Who had to be propitiated and conciliated was offered to a people whose priests not only propitiate and conciliate three hundred million gods of the Hindu pantheon, but are themselves those very gods. The bad news of Damnation, not the good news of Liberation: a threat and not a promise: a doom and not a destiny—was thundered into an atmosphere saturated with the ancient faith—'The whole universe is subject to the gods; the gods are subject to the spells; the spells to the Brahmans; therefore the Brahmans are our gods.' Baptism was offered as an alternative to hell, and Jesus, the crucified, presented, not as the serene and gracious revealer of a Heaven-Father, but as a wounded advocate before an angry judge. The choice lay for India between the new hazard of eternal torment and the old far-off but ultimate certainty of annihilation. She rejected the new God, with his empty heaven and his overflowing hell, but in the very

clash and severance of this rejection, she saw a new light break upon her ancient Way, and rose up with a fresh vigour to pursue it.

Christianity, helped by education and the presence of a Government more democratic and more socialistic than any Government in Europe,* has succeeded in that very direction where Buddhism failed, and where modern Hinduism appeared to be least vulnerable. Christianity has given India the sense of human brotherhood and the idea of social ethics. The immemorial theory of Caste is definitely challenged, the Brahman's contempt for the poor is now regarded with new eyes, and genuine shame is felt for Hinduism's neglect of ignorance and its indifference to suffering. The collision of Christianity and Brahmanism has resulted thus far in a new birth for Hinduism, but not a new birth unto Christ. The grave of Hinduism has become a cradle, but not the manger of Bethlehem. Hinduism is now a child destroying the idols which were once its toys but its forehead is not marked with the sign of the Cross. Christianity has begun to moralize Hinduism, a superb achievement, but it has not spiritualized Hinduism with the joy and serenity of Jesus.

In a private letter written to me by one of the Governors in India, the prophecy is ventured that the Indian Census Report for the present year will witness to a more extensive work of conversion than in the previous decade, and he speaks of high-caste Indian Christians who are sincerely religious. 'But as a rule,' he writes, 'it must be admitted that direct success in the way of conversion is attained among the lower orders of the population, and it is most easily effected among jungle tribes and low castes.'

* See page 320

After referring to a particular Mission which 'baptizes anybody who asks for it,' he gives me the written opinion of an able man of affairs and a close student of ethnological questions, on the subject of Christianity's indirect effects on Hinduism:

> Apart from direct conversion, Missionary enterprise has had enormous indirect results. There is one small sect, the Radha Swami, which has actually developed a doctrine bearing the closest resemblance to that of the Trinity. Some elements were already existing in the Kabir Panthi tenets which, according to Grierson, were taken directly from Christianity some centuries ago, but the modern development is much closer. What strikes one most however is the tendency among Hindus to study Christianity not as the Eclectic Brahmos to absorb what is best in its religious teaching, but to ascertain the secret of its success and apply the results to strengthen Hinduism. Such a tendency is most marked in the case of the Arya Samaj. This sect has been influenced for good in its social and ethical aspects by contact with Christianity. Its rejection of caste (theoretical at present) and all ritual is also probably strengthened by the same contact, but in purely religious matters its attitude towards Christianity is direct hostility. It has borrowed the Missionary system but confines its converts to Hindus or persons whose ancestors were Hindus. The few instances of Europeans who have joined it need not be taken seriously. Thus it may be said generally that one great effect of Missionary work has been to excite religious zeal among the mass of Indians, but to this must be added the warning that the zeal so roused is directed towards

the improvement of indigenous creeds, not towards an acceptance of Christianity.

'I may, in confirmation of what is said above,' writes the Governor, 'mention that a very bitter attack is made upon Christianity by Munshi Ram, the head of the Kangri Gurukul, and his co-editor of the *Vindication of the Arya Samaj*. The Arya Samaj is hostile to all existing religions in the East, to Muhamadanism, Orthodox Hinduism, Buddhism, but it reserves its most violent attacks for Christianity.'

Another Governor told me that Christianity in his province had done little more than create a spirit of agnosticism among the educated young people in large towns, 'and this, of course,' he added, 'is all to the good.' It is good only so far as it represents a break with superstition; so far as it tends to deepen and intensify the unrest of India's heart, it is extremely perilous.

The position as it stands at present is this: From the work of the Missions a knowledge of the Character of Jesus has penetrated educated opinion; this knowledge, affecting national ideas on many subjects, has driven the arrogant and self-satisfied Brahman to become a violent missionary for Brahmanism; it has created a new religion of Hinduism among the more liberal and enlightened minds of the community, and has given zeal and enterprise to the religious conscience of the people. Leave out of count for the present the wonderful and moving conversions of Christianity among the humble and meek, the poor and lowly, the unhappy and the outcast—conversions which should inspire the courage of Christendom and lead to a fresh enthusiasm for the religion of Jesus; leave these

conversions out of count for the present, and the position is what I have stated it to be—a revivified Hinduism, a new activity in religious thought, and a Brahmanism roused and oppugnant.

One of the Indians with whom I discussed this matter, a scholar, the principal of an important college, and one of the leaders of the Brahmo Samaj, told me that Christianity was doing a great work for Hinduism. 'Your science has helped us,' he said, 'to understand the physical universe, your literature has broadened our minds and deepened our sympathies, but Christianity has perhaps done more than these in recalling us to the great ethical truths of our own religion. We now perceive that the longing of man is for the Infinite; we go back to our ancient books and we find that our forefathers longed for the Infinite; and we know, as the best of our people have always known, that communion with the Infinite is possible to man and does not demand the interference of the priest. We have a great reverence for Jesus; we feel, with Emerson, that He 'saw with open eye the mystery of the soul'; we confess that He revealed the noblest truths; and we acknowledge the great debt owed to Him by all humanity. But we do not call Him God. We could not do that. We shudder at the claim Christianity makes for Him. We do not see from the Bible that He made that claim for Himself. As a Teacher, He teaches us; as a Light, He shines before us; as a Voice from God, we listen to Him with reverence and with gladness. But we do not say He was God. We do not say He was the Infinite. Certainly we reject all the ritual and ceremonial of ecclesiastical Christianity, just as we reject all the ritual and ceremonial of our own priestly Brahmanism.'

The following information given to me by a man well acquainted with the facts, concerns a University Hostel in the United Provinces:—

The Hostel is managed by a Warden, sub-Warden and two Residents, all Englishmen, the first two being clergymen. Students visit the staff for individual Bible study two or three times a week. The attendance for this purpose is purely voluntary and no special privileges are allowed to students who do so attend. For a time there was a boycott of Bible study, but except during that interval about half the students and generally more than half have attended. Most of the students are Brahman, but the popularity of the Hostel is shown by the fact that every year four applications are rejected for each admission. Now, during the ten years for which this Hostel has existed 450 students have resided in it, and there has been one baptism and one other case of conversion though the convert finally shirked an open profession. . . . It is obvious that parents, while they recognize the advantages of their son's honest guidance, have no fears of the latter losing their own religion. The caste Hindu has a firm belief in the perfection of his religion at some remote past and thinks that that past is capable of return.

Mr. —— thinks, and I agree with him, that if Christianity ever does prevail in India it will come from below. If Hinduism remains as it is, Christianity may spread rapidly when education increases among the low castes. *If, however, Hinduism is liberalized, as for example on the lines of the Arya Samaj, Mr. —— thinks that it is quite capable of holding its own. I go a little*

further than he does, and so far as one can attempt to look forward in such a matter, it seems to me almost certain that in such conditions it will hold its own.

This is the opinion of a man who has spent a long life in India, who occupies a position of the highest responsibility, and who knows the Native mind. Therefore, we may conclude, that Christianity in purifying Hinduism is building a barrier against its own victory over India; although some of us may be disposed to see in a Hinduism so purified that it becomes not a theology but a moral principle, and not a philosophy but a religion, a triumph for the Light of the World which shall some day be as great as the victory of our own distracted Christendom. 'Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father.'

Now, in conclusion of this present chapter, I must take leave to caution the reader against thinking that this fermentation of religious ideas is general to the various peoples composing the Indian Empire. It is limited to an extremely Little Flock—to the educated. But just as the ideas of the educated in Europe percolate by some mysterious process to the least intellectual circles of our complex society, so that the mind of an uncultured and inarticulate democracy is sometimes actually in advance of orthodox opinion, and has broader vision and nobler horizons than the conservatism and traditionalism of classes far less ignorant, so in India one is conscious of a general disturbance of the mental atmosphere and feels that the leaven of new ideas is working towards a revolution which will one day be total and complete. However, at the present

time, the fermentation which is visible and tangible and audible, the fermentation which is engulfing gods and sapping the foundations of human faith in a spiritual destiny, is restricted to the cities and even there is only active among the young and the middle-aged.

The human millions of India still inhabit a darkness such as brooded over the whole earth in the dim ages of mortality's first ascent into the field of consciousness. They show the student of evolution some of the very earliest stages in the advance of humanity. They teach us to know ourselves as we were before the dawn of Christianity and the rise of science. They witness to the steadying and most important fact, that evolution is not a process independent of mankind, not a universal advance of human nature, not a propulsion of spiritual forces exerted on all the peoples of the earth simultaneously and with equal force, but a process peculiar to certain races, dependent absolutely on the exercise of the rational faculty, and demanding a continual effort and a perpetual rigour of the moral nature.

It is proved so far as anything which concerns the earliest ages of evolution can be proved, that Magic preceded Religion. There were witches before there were priests, and magicians before there were kings. This is the great and illuminating thesis of *The Golden Bough,* a book which more than any other work of man gives to the mind such a sense of its own immemorial antiquity that it evermore thinks in æons and anticipates no finality. Dr. Frazer has demonstrated that far back in the abyss of time man in his savage state first believed himself capable of controlling natural objects, and that it was only after a long experience of nature's indifference to spell and talisman, that the more

intelligent rose to a conception of creatures bigger and stronger than himself who controlled the world from an invisible altitude or an unfathomable depth. Thus came Religion, superstitious Religion, and Religion permeated with the spirit of Magic. And to the present day, not only in India but throughout the world and at the very heart of civilization, and in the purest religion known to history, this earliest faith of the human race persists and is ever at war with the spirit of evolution.

When we survey the existing races of mankind from Greenland to Tierra del Fuego, or from Scotland to Singapore, we observe that they are distinguished one from the other by a great variety of religions, and that these distinctions are not, so to speak, merely coterminous with the broad distinctions of race, but descend into the minuter sub-divisions of states and commonwealths, nay, that they honeycomb the town, the village and even the family, so that the surface of society all over the world is cracked and seamed, sapped and mined with rents and fissures and yawning crevasses opened up by the disintegrating influence of religious dissension. Yet when we have penetrated through these differences, which affect mainly the intelligent and thoughtful part of the community, we shall find underlying them all a solid stratum of intellectual agreement among the dull, the weak, the ignorant, and the superstitious, who constitute, unfortunately, the vast majority of mankind. One of the great achievements of the nineteenth century was to run shafts down into this low mental stratum in many parts of the world, and thus to discover its substantial identity everywhere. It is beneath our feet—and not very far beneath them—here in Europe at the present day, and it crops up on the surface in the heart of the Australian wilderness and wherever the advent of higher civilization has not crushed it under ground. This universal faith, this truly Catholic creed, is a belief in the efficacy of magic. While religious systems differ, not only in different countries, but in the same country in different ages, the system of sympathetic magic remains everywhere and at all times substantially alike in its principles and practice. Among the ignorant and superstitious classes of modern Europe it is very much what it was

thousands of years ago in Egypt and India, and what it now is amongst the lowest savages surviving in the remotest corners of the world. (*The Golden Bough,* 3rd Edition, Chap. IV, pp. 235-236.)

The learned author in another part of his book makes the following translation from Dr. W. Caland's *Altindisches Zahber-ritual,* mentioning that some good authorities hold that the very name of Brahman is derived from *brahman,* 'A magical spell':—

> He who has been wont to regard the ancient Hindus as a highly civilized people, famed for their philosophical systems, their dramatic poetry, their epic lays, will be surprised when he makes the acquaintance of their magical ritual, and will perceive that hitherto he has known the old Hindu people from one side only. He will find that he here stumbles on the lowest strata of Vedic culture, and will be astonished at the agreement between the magic ritual of the old Vedas and the shamanism of the so-called savage. If we drop the peculiar Hindu expressions and technical terms, and imagine a shaman instead of a Brahman, we could almost fancy that we have before us a magical book belonging to one of the tribes of North American red-skins.

Dr. Frazer is careful to remind his reader that the barbarous influence of faith in Magic is not confined to India, to North America, to the centres of Africa and Australia, but is present in the most civilized countries and makes itself evident even in the religions which have done most to overthrow its dominion. While we properly adjudge Brahmanism to be a form of Magic, we should do well, therefore, to examine our own religion and

see how far this ancient superstition is recurring and so dragging back a pure faith in a spiritual religion to the ceremonialism and idolatry of a savage past. Most important is it for us to make this examination, before we send emissaries of our religion to convert the races who are still plunged in the night of superstition and whose priests know more about Magic than our missionaries are able to tell them, and whose ceremonies are more full-blooded with thorough-going belief in ritual than anything that the most ransacking mediævalist can discover or invent.

In the following quotation from Dr. Frazer's work the reader will perceive how easily Magic may become associated with Christianity and will realize with what wisdom the great men and the great poets of Israel, guarding the glory of their faith in a Spiritual God, set themselves to crush and extirpate its menace in the form of idolatry or in the shape of priestcraft:—

> Among the ignorant classes of modern Europe the same confusion of ideas, the same mixture of religion and magic, crops up in various forms. Thus we are told that in France 'the majority of the peasants still believe that the priest possesses a secret and irresistible power over the elements. By reciting certain prayers which he alone knows and has the right to utter, yet for the utterance of which he must afterwards demand absolution, he can, on an occasion of pressing danger, arrest or reverse for a moment the action of the eternal laws of the physical world. The winds, the storms, the hail, and the rain are at his command and obey his will. The fire also is subject to him, and the flames of a conflagration are extinguished at his word.' For example, French peasants used to be, perhaps are still, persuaded that the priest could celebrate, with certain special rites, a 'Mass of the Holy Spirit,' of which the efficacy was so miraculous that it never met with any opposition from the divine will; God was forced to grant whatever was asked of Him in this form, however

rash and importunate might be the petition. No idea of impiety or irreverence attached to the rite in the minds of those who, in some of the great extremities of life, sought by this singular means to take the kingdom of heaven by storm. The secular priests generally refused to say the 'Mass of the Holy Spirit,' but the monks, especially the Capuchin friars, had the reputation of yielding with less scruple to the entreaties of the anxious and distressed. In the constraint thus supposed by the Catholic peasantry to be laid by the priest upon the deity we seem to have an exact counterpart of the power which, as we saw, the ancient Egyptians ascribed to their magicians. Again, to take another example, in many villages of Provence the priest is still reputed to possess the faculty of averting storms. It is not every priest who enjoys this reputation, and in some villages, when a change of pastors takes place, the parishioners are eager to learn whether the new incumbent has the power (*pouder*), as they call it. At the first sign of a heavy storm they put him to the proof by inviting him to exorcise the threatening clouds; and if the result answers to their hopes, the new shepherd is assured of the sympathy and respect of his flock. In some parishes, where the reputation of the curate in this respect stood higher than that of his rector, the relations between the two have been so strained in consequence that the bishop has had to translate the rector to another benefice. Again, Gascon peasants believe that to revenge themselves on their enemies bad men will sometimes induce a priest to say a mass called the Mass of Saint Sécaire. Very few priests know this mass, and three-fourths of those who do know it would not say it for love or money. None but wicked priests dare to perform the gruesome ceremony, and you may be quite sure that they will have a very heavy account to render for it at the last day. No curate or bishop, not even the Archbishop of Auch, can pardon them; that right belongs to the Pope of Rome alone. The Mass of Saint Sécaire may be said only in a ruined or deserted Church, where owls mope and hoot, where bats flit in the gloaming, where gypsies lodge of nights, and where toads squat under the desecrated altar. Thither the bad priest comes by night with his light o' love, and at the first stroke of eleven he begins to mumble the mass backwards, and ends just as the clocks are knelling the midnight hour. His leman acts as clerk. The host he blesses is black and has three points; he consecrates no wine, but instead he drinks the water of a well

into which the body of an unbaptized infant has been flung. He makes the sign of the cross, but it is on the ground and with his left foot. And many other things he does which no good Christian could look upon without being struck blind and deaf and dumb for the rest of his life. But the man for whom the mass is said withers away little by little, and nobody can say what is the matter with him; even the doctors can make nothing of it. They do not know that he is slowly dying of the Mass of Saint Sécaire. (*The Golden Bough,* Third Edition, Chap. IV, pp. 231-233.)

I must not further plunder Dr. Frazer's great work, but must content myself by saying that in that monumental thesaurus of superstition and misbelief, which is at the same time the most engaging and charming story ever unfolded by a master hand, the reader will find innumerable instances gathered from the British Isles, and in our own day, of a lingering faith in the absurdest Magic to be found in heathendom, a faith if not so blasphemous as that to be seen openly practised among the ignorant peasants of a Roman Catholic country, yet a faith entirely at variance with the religion of Jesus.

Most people have smiled over that letter of Horace Walpole giving an account of his experiences in Italy: 'Among other things of great sanctity there is a set of gnashing of teeth, the grinders very entire; a bit of the worm that never dies, preserved in spirits; a crow of St. Peter's cock, very useful against Easter; the crisping and curling, frizzling and frouncing of Mary Magdalen, which she cut off on growing devout. The good man that showed us all these commodities was got into such a train of calling them the blessed this and the blessed that, that at last he showed us a bit of the blessed fig-tree that Christ cursed.' Such is the foolishness of a Latin Christianity penetrated and suffused by the ancient superstitions of Magic; but are there not

evidences in our own Christianity, in spite of all the light and liberalism flooding England from one end of the country to the other, of the same persisting superstitions and the same inclination of the human mind towards Magic?

I hope that no reader will regard the latter pages of this chapter as a digression. My object has been to show that a Christianity which is priestly in character and which savours in the least degree of Magic, cannot look for the conversion of India, where an immemorial priesthood and a thorough and explicit Magic are masters of the situation.* I can easier believe that Brahmanism will eventually colour this priestly and sacrificial Christianity, carrying our ritual and our ceremonial still further from the majestic simplicity of Jesus, than that such a Christianity will ever convert India from her unrest and her pessimism to the faith of a little child and the peace that passes all understanding.

Some of the opinions expressed in this chapter will certainly have no severer critic than Fakir Singh and many another able officer in the Salvation Army; but I believe that the majority of observant men in the Indian Civil Service will find in them little to object against, save only, perhaps, a certain dogmatism in phraseology, for which I lay the blame on my temperament and present my apologies to the gentle reader.

* It is most important to bear in mind that England's greatest obstacle to an understanding with Muhamadan people throughout the entire East is the ceremonialism of Christianity, regarded by all Mussulmans as blasphemous idolatry.

WHAT IT COSTS

A YOUNG Hindu, handsomely dressed and of a noble countenance, entered one day the headquarters of the Salvation Army in Calcutta, and drawing a Bible from his cloth inquired if he might ask a question. The Salvationist to whom this inquiry was put, studying his man, anticipated controversy. To his surprise, however, the young Brahman turned to the incident of the man who had great possessions, and reading that story, slowly and thoughtfully, emphasized the words *Sell whatsoever thou hast,* repeated them, and at the end of his reading went back to them again.

'I want to know,' he said, 'what is the meaning of those words—Sell whatsoever thou hast. Can you tell me what they mean?'

The Salvationist, a little puzzled and perplexed, replied that the command referred to those great possessions of the young man which were the chief obstacle between his soul and God. 'In spite of a wish to be good and kind,' said he, 'this young man was so taken up with his fine goods that he loved them more than God. Money was for him the greatest thing in life. Until he could bring himself to sell his property and give up his money to the poor, he could not truthfully say that he loved God with *all* his heart, and with *all* his mind, and with *all* his soul.'

The Brahman listened attentively, closed his Bible, and said quietly: 'I fear you do not understand it. I think I know what it means, but I am not certain.'

The Salvationist asked him if he desired to become a Christian.

He replied: 'I am not willing to sell all that I possess.'

'You know the text,' asked the Salvationist, '*What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?*'

The Brahman looked at him steadily, and replied —'Some day I will sell all; but not yet.'

When he had departed the Salvationist turned to Mark's gospel and read quietly to himself the story of the man who refused discipleship:—

> And when He was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to Him, and asked Him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?
>
> And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou Me good? there is none good but One, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.
>
> And he answered and said unto Him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.
>
> Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.
>
> And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

It seemed to him that he had given a right answer,

he could not see what other answer was possible; and yet this young Brahman had said, 'I fear you do not understand it.' The story was simple enough. A man morally good but possessed by his possessions, had come to Jesus with the unrest of a soul starving for the spiritual life; and he had been told by Jesus that if he wanted to perfect his morality he must sell his possessions, get rid of his money, and give up his life to the service of his fellow-men. That was the story. Jesus Himself had supplied the commentary. 'It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God.'

But he remained troubled and uneasy, haunted by the reproachful thought that some other answer might have given peace to the heart of the inquirer and perhaps helped him to make the great surrender.

Some little time after this event, the young Brahman appeared at one of the meetings of the Salvationists in Calcutta. There was a great crowd in the hall, but the young and distinguished-looking Brahman was recognized by the Salvationist and they exchanged greetings. At the conclusion of the address, an appeal was made to those who truly desired the liberation of Christ, to come out in the sight of all men and kneel at the bench of penitence.

To the relief and delight of the Salvationist, among the very first to rise was the young Brahman; but scarcely had he moved a few steps from his place in the crowded audience, when a storm seemed to break out in the meeting. A group of men, raising a shout and uttering threats and maledictions, started up from the back, thrust their way through the frightened people, laid violent hands upon the

young Brahman, and bore him out of the hall with such wrath and indignation on their faces as struck terror into the hearts of the low-caste people.

For a few weeks nothing more was heard of this young man. Then one day he appeared at the head-quarters of the Salvationists, and said, 'I want you to take me in.'

He turned to the man whose advice he had first sought, and said, 'I have begun to sell my all.'

They learned his story up to that moment. It appeared that he had come across a Bible at his college, and out of curiosity had begun to read it. The Character of Jesus, the beauty of His teaching, and the nobility of His bearing in the hour of persecution and death, had made a profound impression upon him. Of such a Master he desired to be a disciple. But the conditions of discipleship were hard. He was haunted by the command, *Sell whatsoever thou hast.* He considered what it was he should have to sell, and the sacrifice appeared greater than he could bear. In his trouble and distress, thinking perhaps that his knowledge of English or his ignorance of Christianity had led him astray he came to the Salvationists and asked the meaning of those words, *Sell whatsoever thou hast.* The answer had not satisfied him. He felt convinced that his own instinctive interpretation was the true one. He went home to consider it. His interest in Christianity was now so great that he discussed it with his tutor, his fellow-students, and even in his home. He belonged to the highest caste of Brahmans, and his father, a rich and powerful man, officiated in the temple. In such a household to discuss Christianity was to discuss Socialism at a King's table. Ridicule was poured upon the pretensions of this religion. No one seemed to feel as

he felt the wonder and magic of Jesus, no one even seemed to realize the beauty of that perfect Character. The discussions that he introduced met with contemptuous ridicule, and were extinguished in disdainful laughter. Even his tutor, for whom he entertained a great affection, and who was a man of learning, dismissed the religion of Christianity as a matter unworthy of serious attention.

Nevertheless, so potent was the spell of Jesus on his heart and mind, that he determined at last to surrender his soul to Christianity. For this purpose he had attended the meeting of the Salvationists. But the suspicions of his people had been aroused. Watched and spied upon, he had been followed to the meeting, and at the moment of his surrender he had been dragged away and carried to his home. There the entreaties of his father and the tears of his mother, though they shook his whole nature, had failed to alter his resolution, and for more than a week he had been chained hand and foot, and fed upon rice and water. At the first opportunity of escape, he had come to the Salvationists and now he asked them to take him in.

'Why do you come to us?' he was asked.

'Because,' he answered, 'you appear to me truly to be following Christ.'

For a fortnight he lived openly at the head-quarters, refusing their offer to send him to a place of safety. Then, suddenly and without warning of any kind, he disappeared. Two months passed without news of him. He had mysteriously vanished out of life. Not a sign came to them that he was alive. Whether he had been abducted, or of his own will had gone back to Hinduism, no one could say. He had appeared anxious and uncertain during that fortnight's residence, constantly reading his

Bible, constantly seeking private communion with God in prayer. They realized that the change was a great one—from the luxury and comfort of his father's house to the rough lodging and short commons of their own primitive establishment; with the large humanity which characterizes so many of these good and simple men, they acknowledged that the actual life of poverty and self-sacrifice is different from the ideal and is not without its disappointment and its disillusion. Perhaps the reality had been too much for him. Perhaps he had repented of his impulsive conversion.

But one day he came back to them. He told his first friend among these Salvationists that he had been carried away by his parents to Benares, that their entreaties had become threats and menaces, that his father had paid a large sum of money to get him reinstated in caste, that he had been forced to bathe in the Ganges, and that he had been compelled to bow to idols.

'I submitted,' he said, 'because it entailed no violence on my part; but when I stood in the Ganges, I prayed—Lord Jesus, wash me in Thy precious blood and I shall be whiter than snow; and when I was kneeling in the temples, I prostrated my soul before the Eternal Father, and said—Thou art God alone.'

He told of how his mother had implored him on her knees not to disgrace them by becoming a Christian, of how the horror of becoming a casteless man had been forced upon him by his father, and of how his loved tutor and his brothers had joined with their father and mother to make him feel the shame and scandal of deserting Brahmanism for the despised life of a Christian outcast.

'Well,' said the Salvationist, 'you have now

proved for yourself the meaning of those words, *Sell whatsoever thou hast.*'

'Not yet,' he answered; 'but, I have nearly sold all.'

Some days later he came to this Salvationist and said to him—'It is over now. I have sold all.' He appeared to be heavy with desolation and bowed with grief, but there was nevertheless in his eyes the look of a man who has come through darkness and is glad of a light that is yet too strong for him.

He was asked what final sacrifice had been made.

'Everything is given up now,' he answered. 'I have not only ceased to be a Brahman; I have ceased to be a human being. I am not only an outcast, I am dead. I have neither father nor mother, brothers nor sisters. They made an effigy of me, they set up a pyre, and when the effigy was burned, they buried the ashes. It was not the effigy they buried; it was me. Not one of my family now regards me as a living man. If I meet my mother in the street, she will pass me without a word. If my father were to see me dying of hunger, he would not give me a morsel of food. It would not be me my mother passed in the street, it would not be me to whom my father refused food; it would be a stranger and an outcast. I, their child, am dead; I, their son, am buried. It is the end.'

In this way he sold his sonship, his property, his rank, his comfort, and became an outcast on the face of the earth. Now, to certain Indians this would be no hardship, and even to certain Brahmans it would not be a burden so very grievous to be borne; but to a Bengali Brahman, the softest and least virile of all Hindus, and to a Bengali Brahman brought up in an atmosphere of the greatest comfort and luxury, such a sacrifice demanded a superb heroism.

For, this rich youth, stripped of his social trappings and exposed to the poverty of the open world, went out with a single European Salvationist as an Apostle to as low and degraded a people as one could find in almost any part of the world. He went to the Santals, aborigines of Bengal, a people who eat rats and snakes, and who are looked upon even by low-caste Hindus as the untouchable off-scourings of the human race. It was his own wish that he should go to these particular people, and he went with only staff, blanket and water-pot. He slept in the open; he accepted the rice which these untouchables cooked for him; and, seated under a village tree, surrounded on all sides by these degraded savages, with a concertina in his hands, he would sing songs about a God of Love and a happy heaven after death, or tell them in their own language and with all the force of their own idiom the story of Jesus.

Up till that time the Salvationists had experienced the greatest difficulty in approaching the suspicious and ignorant Santals. But now, perfectly sure that these strange Europeans in native dress were not 'coolie-catching for Assam,' the villagers extended to them the pleasantest of welcomes and gave them a serious hearing. The result was a work of considerable usefulness among these poor savages; many became faithful and devout Christians, and a new idea of morality was born into their barbarous philosophy.

For some years the young Brahman gave himself body and soul to this hard, difficult, and heart-breaking life. He was transformed from a soft and troubled youth into a vigorous and rejoicing man. He loved his work. He loved the people. Never once did he complain of his rough life, never once

did he speak harshly of the Santals' stupidity and their deadness to spiritual ideas. So long as men would listen and he could tell the story of Jesus, he was happy; and he loved above all things to hear them pray to *Our Father* in their own language, with their hands crossed and their faces raised like little children to the sky.

It was his devotion to this work which brought about his death. In an epidemic of small-pox he was working with increased devotion and renewed energy, when he contracted the disease. He died without a shadow of doubt, without a shadow of regret. Life had been as he could have wished it to be.

'You are not sorry,' he was asked, 'that you sold all that you had?'

'No,' he answered, 'no, I am not sorry: I am glad. But, I have missed my mother and I should have liked to have my tutor for my friend.'

From this narrative the reader will understand that it is no easy thing for Christianity to effect conversions among the high-caste Hindus. When the taunt is levelled, or the confession fairly made, that Christianity can only boast of conversions among the humble and the outcast, it should always be borne in mind that to effect conversions in other castes is a matter of the very greatest difficulty; nay, a matter almost impossible among the highest castes of all. For, to convert a Brahman is to take Portsmouth and capture Berlin, so defended is he by the armament of custom and the fortification of prejudice. Indeed, when a European really grasps the network of cunning device which the piercing ingenuity and intolerant arrogance of Brahmanism have combined to build for its defence against Christianity, he will marvel that any single

man of the higher castes has ever escaped into freedom.

At the beginning of all these devices there is the question of marriage. The Brahman priest keeps the tightest hand on Hymen's torch, and makes it the truncheon of obedience. He knows that the first business of every Hindu, after he has begot a son to sacrifice at his tomb, is to find husbands for his inconvenient and expensive daughters. Let a man defy his priest ever so slightly, and he will find no one of his own caste willing to provide a husband for his daughter. It is forbidden by the priest that men should cross the sea; hundreds of Hindus violate this command every year; and perhaps for some time afterwards they live in contemptuous indifference to the priest's displeasure. But let a daughter be born to them, or let them desire to find a wife for one of their sons among high-caste families, and then, down on their marrow-bones they must go to Jack Priest. Nor is it enough that they kneel. Asiatic ideas of humiliation are not so mild as European. The humble and supplicating cringer must consume in the presence of this master—what think you?—the five products of the cow! Yes; this is unvarnished, absolute truth. Of course, the priest is accommodating. The very rich may get off with a swinging fine and two or three pilgrimages: a man of power and influence may only have to touch with a finger, and then carry the finger to his tongue, the five discordant products of the sacred cow; but a man out of whom the priest can get nothing and from whom he looks for no protection or assistance, and perhaps whom he desires vindictively to humiliate and abase, must actually take into his mouth and swallow the milk, the saliva, the tears, the urine, and the excrement of the cow.

To break caste in India is to break a priest's rule, and the consequences of such a violation are but faintly imaged to our mind in the consequences which would befall a man in England who cheated at cards, forged cheques, purloined jewellery, and blackmailed his friends. We can better imagine the condition of things in India by likening it to a supposititious state of affairs here, in which a man who ate jelly with a spoon would next day find himself the shivering victim of an archidiaconal visitation, or a man who wore a white tie with a dinner jacket find himself cast upon the Thames Embankment by the Archbishop of Canterbury and chivvied out of Rowton House and Salvation Army Shelter by the ceaseless activity of the Bishop of London. For the offences which the priest punishes with outlawry or loathsome ceremonies of abominable degradation, are not crimes against society and not defiance of Almighty God, but are things right and proper to every free-born man, and sinful only in this, that they are forbidden by the etiquette of Brahmanism.

But that etiquette is designed with a cunning and far-reaching purpose. It is to keep Hinduism uninfluenced by any religion, philosophy, or science in the world; it is to keep the Hindu faithful to Brahmanism; and it is to preserve the power of the Brahman.

You may be the greatest aristocrat in Europe, or the most holy saint in the world, but the faithful Hindu, however disgusting his habits and unprincipled his conduct, will go wash himself, spiritually disinfect himself, after shaking your hand. For there is flattery in the iron law of Brahmanical isolation. The Hindu is encouraged to regard himself as the first flower of the human race; he is taught

from his youth to look upon the white man with contempt and aversion; he is bred in the highest conceit ever known in history; and he is made to feel that the prison which shuts him in and makes him a miserable slave is in truth a proud palace of superiority which protects him from the contagion of inferior people.

The fundamental and axiomatic doctrine of reincarnation, with all its subsidiary ceremonials of death, is a most powerful guard against invasion, a most powerful preventive against desertion. A superstitious man taught to think that he may be born again, endlessly, endlessly, and in every condition of misery and degradation, and who has inherited with the blood of his parents the fixed belief that the Brahmans can control the powers of the universe, will think twice, nay, will think a thousand times, before he takes such a step as will incur even the annoyance of those powerful twice-born men, much more such a step as will flout them and bring all the artillery of their magic against his soul.

In no country in the world is custom—*Dastūr*—so omnipotent as it is in India. My servant going with me on my shopping excursions always got a commission at every native shop we entered. He had not taken me there, and he neither selected the articles I purchased nor helped to make my wants known to the shopkeeper; he was there merely to carry my parcels and to direct my cab-driver; but he always got bakshish, or as such commissions are significantly called, *dasturi*. 'It is the custom,' he told me. Never mind how unreasonable or preposterous a thing may be, so long as it is sanctioned by *Dastūr*, it is held to be the most natural thing in the world.

Therefore, with a Brahmanical priesthood governing every department of social life, arbiter of marriage and lord of death, and with a people absolutely subservient to the time-honoured laws of Custom, how can we wonder that the classes most amenable to priestly discipline because they are the principal sharers in the advantages of that tyranny —a solid phalanx of superstition and conservatism —how can we wonder that they should withstand the warring and contending and competing missionaries of a dismembered Christendom? Is it not a matter for amazement that any conversions at all should occur among these guarded, governed, and disdainful millions?

That there is a real rivalry between the various missionaries of Christianity the following brief, almost amusing, almost gruesome, and withal sorrowful story, told to me by a doctor in one of the Salvation Army hospitals, pretty faithfully attests. The doctor in question, a young man bristling with energy, quick in action, resolute in purpose, and most engaging with his mixture of profound religiousness and joyful humour—was called to the deathbed of a young Native converted to Christianity by the Salvation Army. This poor fellow's father had been converted by the Roman Catholic Mission and there was a certain amount of strife between them.

'When I arrived,' said the doctor, 'I found one of our Salvationists, an excellent good man, soothing the boy's last minutes with kind words and gentle assurances of comfort. He had been sent for by the mother. Some time after my arrival, into the house came a Roman Catholic priest, post haste. We were amazed. He took no notice of us, said no word to the boy, now almost

unconscious, but began with a deal of puffing and panting to get into his sacred robes. While he did this, the Salvationist knelt down and prayed. The priest told him to stop. He went on. The priest came to the bedside and began the service of Extreme Unction. This riled me. Then he ceased and said to the Salvationist, "Stop that row!" But our fellow went on—fine! fine! Oh, he was a master at praying. But think! There was I, holding the boy's pulse, of course he was quite unconscious then, with a Salvationist praying hard at my side of the bed, and a Roman Catholic priest gabbling away as fast as he could go, on the other; and over us all—Death! Death!—the great Mystery! I felt just like a referee, with my watch in my hand, waiting for the end of a race! I was mad as fire with the priest, and I was half afraid the Salvationist might stop praying and leave the Catholic last on the field—to boast afterwards that the boy had died a faithful Roman. So I kept on whispering to our officer to go on, to keep it up, all the time feeling the pulse and keeping an eye on the perspiring priest. Prayer was of no avail, but I wanted our man to be there, and I bade him go on. And all the time, the priest was rattling away and the poor pulse was flickering into everlasting quiet. Just before the priest had come to the point of his ceremony, the pulse stopped, and I said, "It 's over—God bless him." I tell you, if the priest had started on his business of touching the body and all the rest of it, then and there I should have knocked him down. My blood was up. The whole thing fairly sickened me. Fancy, the interference, the insolence, the scandalous humbug of it! But can't you see the scene?—the robed priest on one side, the praying Salvationist on the other, and I, holding the pulse

and the watch, and telling our man to keep on praying. It wasn't a race for a man's soul. But it was a race for decency and justice. I think if the dying boy had been conscious enough to know what was going on, I should have taken that priest by the scruff of his neck, and——. But it was a scene, I tell you. Lord, Lord, what a world it is.'

Not once or twice, and not here and there, but many times and all over India, I heard from men outside the arena of religious activity, that the conflict between various Missions is fatal to the progress of a true and fundamental Christianity. One Mission comes into a district, sets up its buildings, and employs a certain number of Indians: then comes another Mission, goes one better in the way of buildings, and offers a more liberal wage—actually taking away the servants of its rivals. I know myself painful instances of such a state of things. And there is one small town, almost a village, where you may see no less than three large Mission hospitals! Is it a matter of wonder that the Indians laugh among themselves, compare wages, go where they get most, and offer themselves to any form of religious ceremonial, baptism or anything else, so long as they get good wages and medicine for nothing?

One most deplorable aspect of this unseemly rivalry is the fact that a united Christendom, even with a gospel of pessimism, might have converted long ago the whole of the depressed classes. A Governor of a great province said to me, 'I am absolutely certain that if the Missions had been united, and all the money poured into India had been from the first spent on a concentrated errand to the outcast peoples, Christianity would now be able to claim 70,000,000 Native Christians. These

people, you see, have everything to gain and nothing to lose, by becoming Christians. They are outcasts, and Christianity would make them members of the Sahib's caste. They are the slaves of the castes above them; and Christianity would set them free. I cannot imagine anything easier for missionary enterprise than the conversion of India's depressed classes. And, mark you, a democracy of 70,000,000 Christians would have a most astonishing effect upon the higher castes. But —dissension, rivalry, quarrels! Everywhere a waste of money and a waste of effort! It is pitiful. However, they are doing good work here and there, and I suppose a united Christianity in Europe, America, or Asia, is as wild a dream as Plato's Republic and More's Utopia.'

But in spite of the Brahman's jealous and angry hatred of Christianity, in spite of his new-born zeal for Hinduism, and in spite of the lamentable divisions among the Christians, conversions of a marvellous character do occur, and are occurring every day, where Christianity is faithfully and earnestly presented as a liberation from misery and a way of peace. The story that follows, which seems to me perhaps as remarkable a narrative as one can find in all our modern literature of religious experience, testifies to the unique power of Christianity, to the miraculous nature of conversion, and to the supreme need of Christianity's cleansing morality in a country more enfeebled by appalling vices than by the tyranny of its priests.

DE PROFUNDIS

ALTHOUGH the scene of this story is laid in Ceylon, the reader may rest assured that in every way it is symptomatic of existence in India, and also characteristic of religious experience in India wherever the appeal of Christianity for a cleansed heart is brought faithfully home.

The man of whom I write is now forty-nine years of age. He is remarkable in appearance for a perfect tranquillity of expression and a sweet gravity of demeanour such as one associates with the favourite disciple. His dark hair is combed back from the forehead and curls outward from the nape of the neck; his large grave dark-coloured eyes are shadowed by the eave of calm and noble brows; the nose is aquiline and finely chiselled at the nostrils; the gentle lips are all but hidden by moustache and beard of iron grey; he is dark-skinned with the cloudy opaqueness of a true Tamil.

One is struck by the depth of gravity in the beautiful calm eyes, by the sad sweetness of the gentle mouth, and by the tone of the quiet voice, which is almost husky in its lowness and its modesty. He has all the repose and serenity of the Buddha with the meditation and spiritual humanity of St. John. In his presence one is conscious of a rebuke, a sweet and smiling rebuke, to all hurry,

noise, struggle, and glibness. The atmosphere of the man is the solemn calm of a forest and the steadfast quiet of a lake. He seems to breathe the very peace of God.

It was the notable and arresting appearance of this man which first attracted me, and led me to seek an introduction to him from Fakir Singh. I had heard of his extraordinary success as a missionary, his almost unique power among Indians; but it was the man's face that interested my attention. I anticipated a life-story of spiritual grace and religious refinement; I never dreamed that such a man could have lived in depravity, could have descended to the depths of the abyss. I can now more easily think of St. John as a Satyr or the Baptist as a Sybarite, than visualize this gentle and composed saint as the man he was four-and-twenty years ago.

He was born in Colombo of well-to-do Tamil parents who were converted to Christianity before his birth by the Church Missionary Society. He was taught as a child the new religion of his father and mother, and grew into boyhood with much the same knowledge of Christianity as one finds in the ordinary English child of church-going or chapel-going parents.

He was sent to a good school in Colombo, and soon showed himself a boy of unusual ability. But he had not been long at this school before he became the victim of vice. He knew it to be wrong, he felt himself shameful, he even convinced himself that the punishment of such an abomination was the unquenchable fire of an everlasting hell, but he could not break free from it. He used to pray so hard for deliverance from this sin when he was at church that his father and mother thought him more than usually

devout, and praised him for his devotion. Stung by the mockery of this praise, and conscious of hypocrisy, he fought with all his strength to conquer the evil propensity that was slaying his soul. For a few weeks he could stand against the terrible power tyrannizing his will, and then, like a man under hypnotic influence or a slave hasting to do his master's bidding, he fell again, and was plunged into a darkness that eclipsed his soul.

From school he went to a college at Kandy. He there lodged at a boarding-house, and his handsome appearance and charming manners made him a favourite with women staying in the same house. It was his first experience of the world, his first acquaintance with women's society. Unfortunately for his peace of mind, these women were of a second-rate and unhealthy character. The conversation of the shabby boarding-house degraded him and made him wretched.

He would pass whole nights upon his knees, praying to God, agonizing with his soul, clamouring for deliverance. 'I used to feel,' he told me, in his low and muffled voice, 'as if I were wrestling with another being. It was as if something not myself had my soul in its grip.'

When he returned to his home he became on friendly terms with the English pastor of his parents' church, and even acted as an assistant in the church services. At last, so wretched was he, and so attracted by the goodness of his new friend, that he determined to speak to him.

'I did not tell him,' he said, 'what I have told you, but I confessed to him that I was troubled with terrible thoughts. He was a man of extraordinary holiness. He heard me patiently and sympathetically, even affectionately. "Pray," he said, "pray,

and read the Bible. You must pray; there is nothing else." '

But this poor youth had prayed as perhaps the other had never prayed in his whole life. He had shut himself in his room and through all the dragging hours of the long night had cried to God out of the agony and tragedy of his soul's need for mercy and for help. He had prayed with all the passion of his temperament and with all the force of his moral being. He had cried to God, cried with his soul, night after night, night after night. He had lifted to heaven a face wet with tears and streaked with the striving of his spirit. Pray! Had he not prayed again and again? Had he not humbled and abased himself, gone down into the dust and ashes of humiliation, and supplicated, implored, entreated, and sobbed his soul out? Many times.

There was no one to help him. He became dejected, even morose. His parents, noticing the change in him, suggested that he should go and help his brother in a business up the country. He welcomed the prospect of change, and left Colombo as soon as arrangements were completed.

The business to which he went—this man with the face of a saint—was a glorified grog-shop. It is true that the brother described himself as a wine merchant and could boast of a 'wholesale department' in his trade, but the place was a drinking-saloon and the company that frequented it of a wild and dissolute character. The house was situated on a large tea-estate, and the landlord was the owner of one plantation, and the manager of many others—a roaring Irishman, always drunk and abandoned to the mad excesses and helter-skelter escapades which made Jack Mytton a hero

of his time. This man and many another planter visited the grog-shop every day and few ever quitted it till they were badly drunk. The first horror of the youth from Colombo soon wore off in the gaiety and hilarity of his new atmosphere; he did not give himself to drink and he did not take to the prevalent gambling; but he let himself go with the tide of existence in this wild place, continued his evil courses, and gave up the struggle for freedom and purity.

At the death of his brother, he took possession of the business and set himself to make money. He was sober, industrious, and dishonest. He learned to adulterate the liquor he sold, carefully removing the capsules of bottles for this purpose, and so carefully replacing them that it was impossible to detect the transaction. He wasted no money on dissolute excesses or reasonable amusements, kept himself clear of the women in the district, and never imperilled his savings in speculation or gambling. But he had one typical and foolish extravagance. He loved jewels. It was with him something of a passion to cover himself with chains, and gold, and glittering stones. To this end he adulterated drink, hoarded money, and kept himself aloof from the dissolute racket of the place. All the time, he felt that the liquor trade was a bad one, and sometimes he would make an effort to conquer his fatal sin; but, on the whole, he was a bad man who takes life as he finds it and in a hobby which gratifies his sensuous nature loses the sense of responsibility and forgets his soul. So long as he could buy jewellery he was content to go on with his life.

He was reckoned by the planters a good man but something too effeminate and rather a humbug. If he ventured to reprove them for drinking too much

they used to laugh contemptuously and say to him, 'Oh, you can't preach; you're in the business!' They liked to turn his saloon into a bear-garden. They would call Tamils and Singhalese into the saloon and tell them to do some absurd or shameful thing; a refusal meant a blow. The roaring Irishman would very often order the grog-shop keeper to use foul and blasphemous language; a refusal meant a row. On one occasion landlord and tenant had a fight, a long and horrible fight; but a week after that event the landlord came with a company of his friends, apologized to the publican and presented him with a gold pencil-case. The kicked and beaten Tamils would always be rewarded after maltreatment by their bullies, who were only cowardly and brutal in drink. They were generous men enough on all occasions, and in their sober moments, straightforward, honest, and hard-working—men who would have scorned to ill-use a Native. But drink turned them into madmen, and in drink they very often 'made hay' of the grog-shop.

The wild landlord would sometimes send for the publican and receive him in his bedroom. 'He used to lie in his bed,' I was told, 'smoking and drinking, while small pigs, for which he had sent, were being chased, squeaking and squealing round the room by his dogs; he would sit up against the pillows, watching this hunt—shouting with laughter, encouraging the dogs, and making the whole house ring with his yells. And in the midst of all this he would tell me how sorry he was for such-and-such an escapade in my saloon, assure me that he meant to stop all such nonsense in future, swear that drink was a curse, and end up by imploring me to finish a bottle of whisky with him.'

Many years afterwards, when the saloon-keeper

was a captain in the Salvation Army, these two men encountered in the rest-house of a village where the Army was conducting a mission. The Salvationist endeavoured to turn the heart of the Irishman but all in vain; then he asked him for a subscription. 'Willingly,' said the planter, and dipping pen in ink he wrote the following chit: 'Please give Captain —— the sum of one rupee to send all the people in this village to hell.'

But this was after the miracle had happened.

The man of my story married while he was yet a publican. A child was born to him and he began to experience the pleasures of domestic life. He was prosperous; he had many friends; and he was devoted to his wife. But presently he felt the ancient stirrings and unrest of his master vice, and soon again he found himself in conflict for his soul. His horror and fear at this return of a demon he had hoped was slain, this resurrection of a spectre he had dreamed was gone for ever out of his life, filled him with misery and despair. He went to church; he read his Bible; he prayed; he fought manfully against disaster. 'It was as though I were being *pushed* into sin,' he said to me.

One day when he was in Colombo he stopped before a bookshop window, and seeing a volume that he thought might help him in his conflict, he went in to buy it. There were two people in the shop—the man in charge, wearing a uniform, and a poor broken-down drunkard. The man in the uniform was talking to the drunkard and endeavouring to make him realize the need of God in his struggle against drink. The publican, struck by this man's words, and now realizing that the shop belonged to the Salvation Army, went to some bookshelves and made pretence of looking for

a volume, while he listened to every word that was being said.

'There was something in the tone of that man's voice,' he told me, 'which held me like a spell. It was so full of assurance. It was as though he knew by his own experience that what he said was true. And he made goodness seem so happy. I began to feel that there was hope for me. I remember that I felt surprised by the drunkard's want of response. It seemed so clear. It seemed so true. It sounded so good.'

But two years after that incident he was still in the midst of conflict, a man desperate with uncontrollable vice and sunken in despair.

He was walking one day with his mother in the streets of Colombo when they came upon an open-air meeting of the Salvationists. They both stopped and listened. The mother was greatly struck by the earnestness of the speakers, and as they walked away she spoke about it. Her son, who was a secret smoker—his mother and father having a great aversion from tobacco—took his cigars from his pocket and without letting his mother see, dropped them on the road. He had the feeling that he must give up smoking. He also had the feeling that he would be able to give up his vice.

But the strife continued, and though he prayed for strength, no strength came to him. He was being driven straight to madness and suicide by an impulse of his being of which his whole nature disapproved and yet against which his will was powerless to resist.

It chanced one year, when he went to renew the licence of his premises, that he stayed with his brother-in-law in a small town where the Salvationists were that night holding a special

meeting. He suggested that they should attend this meeting and see what the business of Salvation and Conversion really meant. His brother-in-law fell in with the suggestion and they went together.

Many men, public characters for sin and crime, gave their testimonies at this meeting to the saving power of conversion and the joy and peace and happiness of the new birth. One of the speakers was a converted Buddhist who had been convicted of forgery. This man spoke very quietly, and without any strain after effect, telling how he had been led by sin step after step towards crime, and how all his efforts to fight against temptation had failed. The unhappy publican was profoundly moved by this story. The Buddhist spoke of the strength that came to him when, realizing at last that Christ's love had saved him, he bowed at the bench of penitence and yielded up all his efforts in overflowing gratitude to his Saviour.

'I felt that what he said was true. I felt that I had been struggling in my own strength. And I felt that it needed one great moment in my life, *one moment,* to change me from a beaten and despairing man into a soul at peace with God and cleansed from sin. It was like a light in my soul. It was a revelation. At last, it was a voice from heaven. But how to reach that moment! Oh, I shrank from it! By nature I am timid and nervous; and in those days I was weak with self-consciousness and feeble with diffidence; I could not bear to be the central figure in any scene; I always escaped from any gathering in which I might be called upon to make a speech, or in which I might in any way have to take a prominent part. But I felt that my conversion turned upon one great moment, one decisive and terrible ordeal, and I longed for the

power to rise up then and there and throw myself down at the penitent bench. I suppose something of this deep emotion must have shown in my face, for one of the Salvationists, a woman, came to me and asked me if I would not confess my need of God's mercy. I half rose from my seat, but pretending that I had only risen because a woman was speaking to me, I sat down again, trembling and afraid. But just as in former times I had felt that *pushing* towards sin, so I felt now a *pushing* towards the penitent-form. So strong was this impulse that in spite of my failure I rose again. This time my brother-in-law, thinking that I wanted to go home, rose also, and I felt ashamed, and said nothing of my feelings, but walked out of the hall. However the hour was at hand. I kept saying to myself, "If I die to-night! and even if I live, only this slavery!" The horror of dying as I was, the fear of living as I was, mastered my feeble will and cowardly purpose. Without a word to my companion, I turned suddenly about, ran back to the hall, and making my way to the front—I was like a man in a dream—flung myself down at the penitent-form and cried aloud for the mercy of God.'

As he knelt there, shaken by a wild emotion and almost beside himself with religious passion, a woman-Salvationist came to him, knelt at his side, and with a hand on his shoulder, said in a calm and quieting voice—'What are you praying for, brother?'

He answered, 'For Salvation.'

'Why do you pray to God?' she asked.

'Because I feel God can save me.'

'Why?'

'I feel it.'

'Have you not heard that Jesus died for sinners?'
'Yes.'
'For whom?'
'For the whole world.'
'Are you not included in it?'
'Yes.'
'Do you believe that?'
'Yes.'
'*Do* you believe it?'
'Yes.'
'When do you believe it?'
'Now.'
'When?'
'Now.'

As he said that word for the second time, he was conscious of a light in his soul, and he felt as though he were 'drowning in sweetness'; and whether it was the voice of the Salvationist or of an angel he cannot tell, but a voice came to him in his great moment of ecstasy, and said to him—'For the sake of Jesus, God pardons you.'

'I cannot describe to you,' he said, 'the wonderful beauty of that moment. It was an utter loss of self. It was an escape from darkness, an entrance into light. Ah, more than that! I felt myself drowning in sweetness. The whole universe was one great ocean of sweetness and I was drowning in it. But even that cannot tell you what I felt. Perhaps it is wrong to say I felt anything, or thought anything, or realized anything. It would be truer to say I was just conscious of sinking into an ocean of sweetness and that my whole being was overwhelmed by unutterable joy.'

The Salvationist who was kneeling at his side, said to him—'Speak to the people.' Without a thought or shadow of misgiving he rose to his feet,

faced the whole audience, and told them of the new joy in his heart. He smiled as he said to me, 'I was a wonder to myself. Words poured from me. A flood of words!' Then, with grave countenance, he added, 'Truly I may say that at that moment I was filled with the Spirit of God.'

From that minute the devil was exorcised. He was five-and-twenty years of age; and now, for twenty-four years of happiness and peace he has never known one moment of temptation or heard one whisper from the fiend that afflicted him. He has been cleansed. He has been born again. It is as if he had never committed his sin.

On the day following his conversion, he proceeded by train to the town where he intended to renew the licence for his saloon. Suddenly as if a voice had spoken at his ear, he felt that it was wrong to continue in a trade that spread so much misery and degraded so many souls. 'I felt that I was stopped on my journey by an invisible hand. I got out at the next station, and made my way home. But on that return journey, I stopped again and again, like a man without a will of his own, and though the voice told me that to keep a saloon was inconsistent with my new birth, I argued with myself, and said, "But money is owing to me; it is my business, I have a wife and child; I have no other means of existence." Nevertheless, the voice conquered me. It repeated the word *Inconsistent* again and again. I returned, determined to give it up.'

But before he took this step he paid a visit to the Salvationists, and asked them what he should do. 'Roll your barrels and bottles into the ditch,' they told him; 'God will provide.'

He went back to his house and spent the entire night in prayer. When the morning came his soul

was convinced and happy. He had reached that point when the spirit decides absolutely for a right course and is confident of God's approval. He took off all his rings, his watch and his jewellery; and put them aside for ever. Then he went to his wife and told her what he had determined to do. She rejoiced at his decision.

Ridicule was encountered from everybody else. The planters came to the house and rated him for a fool. His friends expostulated. His relations objected. Only his wife stood by him, and encouraged his action. At a meeting which he held in his house a little later, his wife professed conversion with some of his relations.

He sold his business and set up an oilman's stores. A solicitor in the neighbourhood undertook to collect the considerable debts owing to him. In a few months he discovered that this solicitor was defrauding him. He went to law about the matter, and the case was sent to the High Court at Colombo. Before it came on for trial, he attended a meeting of the Salvation Army, and after its conclusion was asked to become an officer. He replied: 'I am afraid I cannot; I am a family man; and I have just begun to open a new business.' They said to him, 'You have been helped, and you should give your life to helping others; come, we will find something for a family man.' He said, 'I must consult my wife.' 'No,' they answered him, 'consult your own heart.'

He felt a powerful inclination to give up everything and to embrace the life of poverty; but the hesitation, and diffidence, and self-distrust, which were characteristic of him in those days, and which now, transformed by a profound religious experience, are the charm and modesty, and self-suppression of a perfectly pure soul, held him in uncertainty.

To his delight, when he laid the matter before his wife, she agreed to the sacrifice, and offered to become a Salvation Army officer with him.

In August, 1887, he sold his business and entered with his wife and child the Salvationists' Training Home in Colombo. The law-suit was still pending, and now, with a heart set on other things, he petitioned Government not to proceed with the case. But it was a criminal action and it had to go on. The lawyer was sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

And now began for him, on the very threshold of his new life, trouble and persecution. It began with his wife's complaint of loneliness. Wisely or unwisely, there was a division of sexes in the Training Home and his wife resented this separation and complained to him of loneliness. Perhaps she found the rough lodging and spare food of a disciple less agreeable than the glowing vision of self-sacrifice. She objected to wearing a uniform, and her child supported the objection with continual grumblings. When he went out into the streets with a begging-bowl for food, his wife's complaints and objections became an angry rebellion. At last, finding him determined to go on, she left him, left him without word of any kind, and took the child to her mother's house.

When he heard where she was gone, loving her deeply and being tenderly attached to his child, he wrote a long letter to her, begging her to return, imploring her not to break her solemn vows to God. She answered the letter, but refused to come back. She said her mind was made up. Nothing on earth would induce her to live the life of a Salvationist.

'For five years,' he told me, 'I only saw her once. Nothing that I could say had power to change her

resolution. The separation caused me great grief. I felt the estrangement more than I can tell you. It seemed to me terrible that religion should be the cause of this break in a union which had been so happy, and which had promised to be so full of blessing.'

One day, after these five long years of separation had passed, and when he was an officer doing great work for Christianity among the Singhalese, he received a letter from his wife saying that she had thought matters over, and had now made up her mind to enter the Training Home and become an officer.

She came and his heart was on fire with joy and gratitude, for it needed but the love of his wife to make his life perfect with happiness. But he found that she had come back to him, as the man she loved, and not to him as the Salvationist, whose manner of life she still regarded with irritation and aversion.

'For eight years,' he said to me, in his quiet voice, a sad smile in his grave eyes, 'she was unsympathetic to our work. But at last the love of God softened her heart. Ten or eleven years ago she surrendered herself utterly to the call of heaven. For ten or eleven years she has been to me the most loving of companions and the most encouraging of help-meets. She is an officer in the Army, and so is one of our sons. The eight years seem now like a night that has passed. I feel that for the last ten or eleven years I have been living in heaven. She is most earnest, sympathetic, and *helpful*. I learn from her, and I lean upon her. She is like an angel, leading me forward.'

BUDDHA-LAND

THE story told in the last chapter had Ceylon for its setting, but my narration was purposely without colour of scene or breath of atmosphere. Now I should like to tell the reader about that beautiful island, not only because it is so wonderfully beautiful, but because I there came across one or two stories of a profoundly interesting nature and made acquaintance with Buddhism as it really is and not as it is made to appear in books of theosophy.

India is like a huge ear, and from the narrowing lobe, suspended by the blue ribbon of the sea, Ceylon hangs gleaming like a pearl. One is apt to think about it as a Wight of our Indian Empire, a tiny jewel almost insignificant in relation to the vastness of its neighbouring continent. But in truth there is a majesty and splendour in this glittering island, a majesty of mountains and a splendour of forest which breathe into the mind a sense of grandeur and destroy the illusion of littleness. Ceylon is nearly as big as Ireland, it has a mountain zone of over four thousand miles, its highest peak pierces the blue sky eight thousand feet above the whisper of its waves, forests thick as earth's earliest ages still riot over five thousand square miles of this garden island, and in the deep

solitude of those forests as many as five thousand wild elephants, with panthers and jackals, find their living and keep their freedom. Then there are the broad waters of Ceylon—tanks, rivers, lagoons, and backwaters:—

> In the plains there are comparatively few rivulets or running streams; the rivers there flow in almost solitary lines to the sea. . . . But in their course through the hills and the broken ground at their base they are supplied by numerous feeders, which convey to them the frequent showers that fall in these high altitudes. Hence their tracks are through some of the noblest scenery in the world; rushing through ravines and glens, and falling over precipitous rocks in the depths of wooded valleys, they exhibit a succession of rapids, cataracts, and torrents unsurpassed in magnificence and beauty. On reaching the plains, the boldness of their march and the graceful outline of their sweep are indicative of the little obstruction opposed by the sandy and porous soil through which they flow. Throughout their entire course dense forests shade their banks.

The traveller, however great his experience of the globe, soon loses in Ceylon that irritating glance of condescension with which he is occasionally apt to survey small islands and little peoples. A few miles out from the Sea Capital, with its unequalled sunsets and its whispering palms, he finds himself in the midst of sublime mountains, and in the centre of unhandselled forest. Even the extreme loveliness of slender trees, the bright green of the valleys and hedgerows, the midsummer pageant of wild-flowers, the gentle music of little brooks and rustling water-

falls, do not beguile from his mind by the affectionate tenderness of their beauty, the sense of grandeur which comes to him from the scarred crest of the tall mountains and the sense of age-long majesty which breathes into his soul from the crowding splendour of the forest.

I can recall now as if it were yesterday the morning on which I travelled by train from the Sea Capital to the Hill Capital. After leaving Colombo and crossing a valley brilliant with the green of rice-fields, gorgeous with the crimson and gold of wild flowers, and tropical with the heavy luxuriance of coco-nut palms, plantains, and bamboos, the train wound its way into the hills and began its six-thousand-feet climb into the mountains. The track lies on the edge of a mountain range, and, across a green plain glittering with ribbons of water and dense with foliage, one looks to another range of mountains which completely rings in the shining garden below one's gaze. On the day that I made this journey, all round the wide and distant circle of the hills, great burly clouds of silver-white were bursting like waves against the russet peaks of the mountains, sending up a smoky spray, and pouring over the rugged crags a veritable foam of vapour. Above them the arc of heaven was a moist blue, trembling with beauty and quivering with light; but all round the tops of the mountains it was as if a tempest raged, and as if an angry sea hidden by their walls of stone, was buffetting those mighty rocks and sending high into the air the broken fury of its waves. It almost seemed as if the torrent of those broken waves would stream like a flood down the mountain-side, submerging the valley and filling to the very brim the mighty basin of the hills.

And beneath the crest of these hills, which shone red-gold against the clouds, like a cloak thrown carelessly over the shoulders the forest descended in great folds of green to the tilled orderliness and garden quiet of the plains. In the midst of this jungle growth, one saw the slender silver trunks and scarlet flowers of the cotton-tree, the tall Palmyra palm loaded with its plumes of clouded yellow, the soft and tender branches of the acacia, the wide and drooping fronds of the coco-nut palm, and clumps of orange-coloured bamboos, whose feathery green leaves stood out from the darkness of enormous rhododendrons. For the rest, great cumbrous trunks and spreading boughs filled the whole scene of the forest with strength and power.

Monkeys could be seen leaping from tree to tree, their young clutching them from below; the lakes and pools were bordered by storks and herons and flamingoes standing like statues in the still water; the bushes glittered with the plumage of fly-catchers and parakeets; the fields below were being ploughed by buffaloes, and overhead one saw the wide-winged hawk 'sailing with supreme dominion through the azure deep of air.'

Such a morning it was, too, when the heart of the great earth can be seen beating under her vesture of spring, when the air becomes visible like a blue water, and the rays of the morning sun are like a mist of fire. Everything seemed to swim in an ether that throbbed with the joyous travail of existence; a faint dimness like the moisture of a girl's eye softened all lines and subdued all colours; and a gentle wind fresh as the ululating rustle of a summer sea moved the glimmering air with a breath that sparkled like the dew.

The dust of India, the depression of India, the

wistful sadness and shabby melancholy of India, nowhere molest the beauty of this darling island floating like the reflection of a skyey Paradise on the bosom of the Indian Ocean. It is, indeed, a little Eden, demi-Paradise, and its luring air, sweet with every scent and odour of the angels' garden, is fresh with the sense of morning and glad with the hope of Spring.

As clearly, too, can I remember a night in this lovely island, when my friend and I, who had rested at Kandy, some two thousand feet above sea-level, left the railway at a small station, and journeyed by bullock-cart into the wilderness of the interior. Fakir Singh had told me that if I wished to see something of village existence in Ceylon, I could not do better than go to a little far-away hamlet where he was carrying his magic-lantern to hold a meeting in the forest. My friend and I drove to the Gardens of Peradeniya in the afternoon, where the air, laden with the scent of many spices, was black with flying-foxes, startled by a gunshot; and after seeing the trees and flowers and shrubs of these famous Gardens we drove to another station and took train for the little town where a bullock-cart was awaiting us. It was towards evening when we arrived, and after being jolted in a springless cart over as rough a track on the earth's surface as ever presumed to call itself a road, we arrived at our destination with the setting of the sun.

A visit from Fakir Singh, all over India and Ceylon, is regarded as a great event by his co-religionists. We found a procession of Salvationists, headed by banners and music, waiting to give him welcome. After greetings, exchanged while the little humped bullocks were being unyoked before a humble inn, the procession re-formed and marched

forward, by way of a wooded lane impossible even for the wheels of a bullock-cart. At the end of this cool and scented lane was a stile in the hedge, and the stile led precipitously down into rice-fields, flooded with the rays of the setting sun. We scrambled over the stile and slid and tumbled down the steep bank into the fields. A narrow path, raised a few inches above the muddy bed of the rice, crossed the wide fields and wound its way to a forest on the further side. A little brook intersected these fields, and as we got upon the plank that bridged it, I noticed an adder in the water. Quick as lightning one of the Native Salvationists plunged his arm into the stream and brought out the squirming snake, his hand grasping it just below the head. 'He can catch any snake,' I was told. 'He is a snake-man, and knows how to catch them.' He let the snake lick his nose, said something and threw it back into the water. I asked what he had said, and inquired why he had not killed the reptile. 'He said that it was not a poisonous snake,' came the answer; 'as for killing it, he never kills any snakes, not even the dangerous ones; it is bad luck.' 'But he is a Christian, and no longer looks on a snake as god or devil?' 'Ah, but it is a superstition! He would not kill a snake.'

Following at the end of the loitering procession, I was struck by the picturesque character of the scene. Like a many-coloured serpent, winding with the narrow footpath and dazzled by the sun, the long line of happy and brightly-dressed humanity seemed, even while it shone so vividly in the midst of the green fields, to be trivial and insignificant, so vast was the sense of distance and so overpowering the sense of the sky's height. Far away across the fields of rice rose the forest and above the forest rose the

mountains and above the mountains rose the sky. And the long line of humanity softly laughing and gently talking in the midst of sunken fields, some of the tambourines tinkling against the saris of the women, had its face towards the setting of the sun —an immense arch of molten gold which was like a gateway into everlasting glory. The air of the fields was quiet with the feelings and thoughts of evening. A solemn stillness held the woods. A majestic peace brooded on the mountains. It was only in the distant west, where the mighty conflagration of the sun throbbed and vibrated with great beats of shuddering fire, that one was conscious of machinery and toil.

We entered the forest by means of a bridge and found ourselves all at once in a deep gloom. Our forest path ascended from the low level of the rice-fields and swerved away over a soft floor of dusky brown into the heart of the woods; the huge trunks of darkening trees loomed up into the dim air like massy pillars carrying the branching roof of a temple. A cloistral silence hung like a thick curtain from the over-arching boughs. The faint patches of pulsing light which here and there glimmered on the ground were like the fading reflections from a painted window or the fragments of a broken mosaic. And the floor of the forest rose and fell in a chaos of quiet, as if the earth had once long ago writhed under the monotony of the shadowing trees until their roots had fastened upon her and held her still.

The silence was presently broken by the loud barking of dogs, and a sweep of our winding, ascending, and descending path brought us in a few moments before a mud-house with a veranda of palm-leaves set in a clearing of the forest. In front of this house rose a small stack of some rough grass,

faggots of wood, and a barn for rice. To the right was a line of outhouses, at the corner of which two or three dogs were chained to tub-kennels. Two Native women were lighting lamps of coco-nut-oil, which they hung in the veranda. Mats were spread on the floor under these lamps, and here we were invited to seat ourselves and eat the curry and rice prepared for us by the host of Fakir Singh. During this meal we talked in low voices, and as the darkness deepened all around us there came from the forest the noise of frogs and crickets, growing louder and louder till the whole earth seemed to ring with it. And then as if fairies were dancing through the trees to dress their Arcady for the delight of the Fakir, the air suddenly began to twinkle with innumerable lights and these little glowing points of fire rose to the very tops of the trees, fluttered down the dim trunks, and drifted hither and thither in a slow eternal motion—fire-flies brighter than glow-worms and as numerous as the stars. A little later and the forest became lit up here and there with a smoky haze of ruddy fire, where companies of people from distant villages were making their way by torchlight to the scene of the meeting. And when it came for us to depart, we also found our way through the forest with these flaming torches—torches nearly six feet in length, composed of coco-nut leaves banded tightly together, which burn with a leaping roar and a scarlet flame for ten or fifteen minutes. It was a journey of enchantment, to walk with the rising and falling floor of the forest, swinging one of these long torches, seeing the stately trunks of the trees lit redly up in a smoke of fire and to watch the crowding shadows on the ground in front of us. All the air was ringing with the rattle of frogs and the chirping of crickets, and outside the little radius

of one's guttering torch the whole forest twinkled with fire-flies.

The meeting was held in a space between two houses, roofed in for the occasion by palm-leaves supported on poles of bamboo. There was a rough platform at one end, part of which was under the veranda of a dwelling-house; and beside this platform was a stretched sheet where the magic lantern was making a disc of white light, in which one saw magnified insects on the other side of the sheet fluttering backwards and forwards beating their wings against the obstruction. For the rest, from one end of the space to the other, there was a great multitude of people sitting on the ground, their dark, intelligent faces lifted to the screen, their hands folded in their laps. The women sat by themselves, many of them with babies in their arms; and one saw in the light of the lamps how beautiful they were and how superior to Indian women in dignity and vivacity. The men were also of handsome appearance, but something effeminate, their long hair knotted over the neck and fastened on the top by a large comb; they had dignity of expression and a certain nobility of features, but they wanted the gaiety and alacrity which made the women so wonderfully pleasant to eyes fresh from India. Shoulder to shoulder, a dense mass of humanity, crowding the whole space of the pandal from end to end, these forest people sang hymns to God, prayed in the Name of Jesus, and listened with an unquestioning eagerness to the words of the Fakir.

My friend and I were obliged to leave this meeting before its conclusion, and with three Singhalese Salvationists to guide our feet and carry our torches we made our way through the forest, crossed the rice-fields, and arrived at last before the inn where

our bullocks had been unyoked. The driver had seen the flare of our torches and had wandered off in search of his oxen. We went inside the humble inn, which was a black and smoky interior like an inferior fowl-house, and drank tonic water and ate biscuits from Reading. Outside the Salvationists were filling the starry heavens with loud and prolonged calls to the invisible driver of the bullock-cart —Coo-e! Coo-o-o-o-ee!! Coo-o-o-o-o-o-o-e-e-e-E!!! After some ten or fifteen minutes, he appeared with his little oxen, and helped by the Salvationists got them yoked to the cart and his lamps lighted. Then we started off.

The driver turned out to be a nervous fellow, frightened of the dark. Our road led through thick forest, and not even the host of fire-flies which swarmed in every tree bordering our way could chase the darkness out of our path. The driver sat bunched up on the pole, jerking the reins, rocking his body backwards and forwards like the cox of a beaten boat, twisting the tails of his cattle, and talking to himself in a frightened undertone. As we had a train to catch, and the last train of the night, we bade him hurry, but he shook his head, pointed to the dark air above our heads and to the black road under our wheels. Every now and then a more than usually dislocating bump quenched the glimmer of a lamp, and immediately he jerked the bullocks back on their haunches, sprang to the ground, and with trembling hands proceeded to strike imperfect matches. My travelling companion, more used to motor-cars than bullock-carts, decided to walk, and as the night was hot, took off his coat and carrying it over an arm stalked on ahead with the little torch of a long cigar to light his way. As he went he dropped out of the pocket of his coat, without

observing the loss, an envelope containing a letter of credit for some hundreds of pounds and a letter of indication. Two or three weeks afterwards the envelope with its contents was restored to him by the Colombo police.

The warm night, scented with the odours of spice gardens and the deep perfume of the forest, made the journey even in a bullock-cart one of exceeding charm. At long intervals on the road, a little company of white-clad barefoot men, accompanied by dogs, would suddenly appear in the light of our lamps, stare in at us with frowning eyes, and then disappear into the darkness, their voices drowned by the gridding of our wheels. But for the most part it was a journey through darkness and silence, with the glitter of fire-flies on either side of us, the broken light of sprinkled stars overhead and the sense of dim columns rising up in the gloom and crowding close about us like an invading army. In this central and enclosing darkness, our little cart with its foggy lamps and its steaming and grunting bullocks crept along, bumping and jolting, like a moth with a broken wing.

At the station we found the bridge spanning the line, and all the approaches and doorways strewn with sheeted figures. We were told that some were pilgrims waiting for a morning train, and some were coolies employed at the station whose work would begin early in the dawn. The stir and movement of the station, and the clangour of a shunting train, seemed to make no difference to the repose of the sleepers, who lay as still as the dead.

In the refreshment car of our midnight train we found a company of over-dressed and loud-talking Eurasians (Burghers as they are called in Ceylon) whose tumblers of whisky had spilled jerkings of

liquor on to the cigar-ash scattered over their littered table. The noise of their voices—they were speaking in English—the offensive braggadocio of their vulgar talk, the smell of the car, and the quality of their cigars—made too great a contrast after the solemnity and silence and breathing sweetness of the forest. We turned out, and continued a hungry and thirsty journey in an ordinary carriage.

We had returned to Kandy, because of an invitation from a young and devout Buddhist to visit the holy shrine which guards the tooth of the Buddha. Early after breakfast on the next day we walked to the beautiful little temple where this relic is kept, and passed from the dazzling sunlight and fresh air of the mountain town, into the shadows and closeness of the temple's precincts. We passed under cloisters, crossed a courtyard, and stopped before a counter stocked with trays of flower petals, behind which a priest in a soiled and shabby yellow robe was standing like a sentinel. Our companion took off his boots, received a little basket of jasmine flowers from the priest, and going forward in his stockinged feet led us up a flight of oak stairs crowded with pilgrims into the outer court of the temple.

'These people,' he explained, 'do not come here to pray. You will see them kneeling before the shrine, but you must not think that they are addressing supplications to Buddha. We recognize that Buddha cannot help us. Pilgrims to this shrine come to gain merit. It is with us a meritorious act to visit the shrines consecrated by the holy life of Buddha. One kneels down, not to pray, but to think of Buddha, to think of his life and to meditate on his chief doctrines.'

Before us hung a dark-coloured curtain. Our

friend drew this on one side, and we found ourselves before the shrine.

Quite close to us, on passing through the doorway, rose the sacred altar, for this shrine is no bigger than a box-room. The little apartment, windowless and heavily ornamented with fading gold and decaying tapestry, was illumined by candles. A casket of gold and silver, encrusted with precious stones, stood on the altar; below it on an immense tray was a heap of flower petals. Beside the altar was the priest in his yellow robe, the head and face clean shaven, one arm obtruding bare from his yellow robe. A youth stood at his side.

Our friend presented his basket-tray of jasmine flowers, which the priest accepted and placed on the altar. They spoke together for a minute, and then our friend moved to one side of the shrine and washed his hands—whether by command of the priest after contact with Europeans or as part of the ceremony I could not understand. Tapers were then lighted and we were allowed to approach close to the altar and examine the design of the casket and the beauty of its jewellery. We were told that such-an-one had given this precious stone and such-an-other had given that, and how much the diamonds were worth, and how much the pearls, and how much the rubies; and how all this here was real gold, and how all that over there was real silver—till one felt as if one were standing before the shrine of Carlo Borromeo under the altar of that marble wedding-cake at Milan.

The twinkling candles in this dark little shrine of metal and tapestry, the heavy scent of flowers, the subdued gleam of gold and silver, the soft glow and sparkle of precious stones starting out of the shadows, and the figure of the shaven priest in his

yellow robe, so kindly in appearance and so indulgent in his courtesy—made an impression on the mind which the vulgarity of sight-seeing could not minimize or obliterate. But the chief feeling that one had was of the extraordinarily close similarity of Latin Christianity and pre-Christian Buddhism, the feeling and the sensation of a same immemorial superstition persisting through the forms and ritual of two religions so diametrically opposed as the religion of Annihilation and the religion of Life.

This feeling was intensified when we turned our backs upon the tooth in its casket—a tooth which I am told is as large as an elephant's—and visited some of the other shrines surrounding the temple. After throwing from the balcony of the library areca-nut flowers to the huge tortoises in the temple tank, we made a round of the shrines, studying crude pictures of hell as childish and disgusting as those of the Campo Santo at Pisa, and observing the faithful at their devotions. We learned that women come to these shrines to ask favours, not to seek holiness or to acquire strength for victory over sin, and that they have their favourite shrines for this purpose. So in Italy you may see poor peasants kneeling with apparently the most rapt devotion before a tinsel figure of the Mother of Jesus stuck all over with sham jewellery, crowned with a coronet, and illumined by coloured candles; and you will learn that they are praying for luck in the next lottery and that they say to each other, 'Such and such a Madonna is no good; I prayed to her for six months and the jade did nothing for me; you should try Our Lady of S. Agostino.'*

* It is not long since the report was spread, that one day when a poor woman called upon this image of the Madonna for help, it began to speak, and replied, 'If I had only something, then I could help thee, but I myself am so poor!' This story was circulated, and very

The likeness which exists between the priests of all religions is very remarkable. Just as there is a likeness between soldiers of every country, so in the priests of Buddhism, Hinduism, and Catholicism there is a very strong and notable family resemblance. The bare-headed, yellow-robed and sandalled priests striding under their umbrellas in the streets of Kandy, each followed by a loose-lipped and sensual-looking boy, have just the expression of intellectual power, bigotry, and contempt for every knowledge except their own craft, which one is accustomed to see in the faces of European priests. They are fine-looking and striking-looking men, but they are tyrants. The loftiness and self-confidence of their appearance are the fruit of a conceit, a vanity, and an arrogance from which the man of science, the historian, and the inspired poet would shrink horrified and ashamed. They bear upon their brows the seal of a petty tyranny and the mark of a pettifogging pride; whether they be Brahmans, Buddhists, or Romans, it is the same; you may see written in all their faces by the unerring hand of their own souls the 'Thank God I am not as other men,' which has ever marked the Pharisee from those who weigh and examine tradition, and who give to Truth what these others abdicate to authority—their reason and their life. The complete surrender of the reason to a set of ideas which cannot be proved and which are as repugnant to common sense as they are contrary to experience, seems to

soon throngs of credulous people hastened hither to kiss the foot of the Madonna, and to present her with all kinds of gifts. The image . . . now sits shining with ornaments of gold and precious stones. Candles and lamps burn around, and people pour in, rich and poor, great and small, to kiss—some of them two or three times—the Madonna's foot. . . . Below the altar it is inscribed in golden letters that Pius VII promised two hundred days' absolution to all such as should kiss the Madonna's foot and pray with the whole heart *Ave Maria.* Frederika Bremer, quoted in Hare's *Walks in Rome,* p. 443.

affect the countenance of man in the same way all over the world however contrary and antagonistic the sets of ideas may be.

At the famous mountain temples hewn out of the rocks of Dambulla and Matale, we found tawdry decorations, shabby pretentiousness and infantile frescoes. The pilgrim who climbs from the road into the mountains by graceful but most tiring steps, who mounts the high rocks plastered with bats at their shadowed summits, and wanders with a winding path through beautiful grassy places happy with birds and butterflies and flowers, must surely be vexed and disappointed when, breathless, exhausted, and with aching legs, he comes before these trumpeted shrines. A roof of zinc covers the veranda, a bell-pull of barbed wire hangs beside a blistered door of deal, fading pictures of hell peel on the walls, and inside the temples—which smell foully of damp and darkness and stone, and which he enters surrounded by priestly and lay hangers-on eager for a rupee—he finds nothing but Megalomania. One recumbent figure of Buddha measured forty-seven feet! The scheme of colour throughout is red and yellow. The whole effect is gross and grotesque. A cavern of gloom whose walls are shaped into sleeping Polyphemi! Every figure of Buddha is shown to one with a yard measure.

One of the saints led me to a hollowed space in the floor of a temple where water quivered in the dim light. 'It is by the Will of God,' he said amiably; 'you cannot see the water fall and no man knows where it goes; it is by the Will of God.' The ground on which we stood was a slop of mud; I looked up to the roof, and saw that the rocks were wet, green, and slimy; a drop of water fell as I looked and splashed into the pool; as for where the

water goes the saint himself had told me that a large basin was filled twice daily from this pool for use in the temple. But one saw in the man's face the look of a child that loves to deceive itself and be deceived; it would have been cruel to destroy his 'Will of God' with a fact in natural law; he was of the great host and company who regard credulity as a virtue and the abnegation of divine reason as an act pleasing to God.

But, the poor fellow's face when he examined my bakshish! He expostulated, and argued, and spread his arms, and surveyed me—man of God that he was—with a most unholy and murderous contempt. The spirit of Buddha vanished from his mild eyes and amiable lips; he became angry, derisive, rude. And as our servant distributed a few annas among the hangers-on of this priest, they too fell a-quarrelling, so that the whole scene was like a scramble on a race-course. We left them and crossed the natural platform of rock, followed by our grinning Hindu who had thoroughly enjoyed this altercation and had told the hangers-on of the priests many hitherto unpublished particulars concerning their ancestors; and from the edge of the bastion we looked over a panorama of beauty so enchanting after the grotesque, childish, and vulgar Megalomania of the temple, that one could almost have prayed to it. The distant mountains melted into the pearl-coloured clouds, the rolling jungle filled the intervening space with a foliage brown, green, and golden, and pouring like a cascade down the sloping rock below our eyes was a shimmering flood of flowers which hummed with the scent of bees and sparkled with the morning dew. The whole wide scene was bathed in sunshine and the still air was sweet with the song of birds.

That the pure and beautiful if melancholy religion of Buddha should descend upon such evil times and become so sordid, shabby, and mean a thing—even the very antithesis of its modest founder—is only a confirmation of the now generally accepted truth that the religious experience of a single man, once formalized and stereotyped for the multitude, tends towards violence, insincerity, and superstition.

Life in Ceylon under the Buddhist priesthood is not an elevating subject for the student of human nature. The priests themselves, divided into two warring sects, are very often, very often indeed, men of a perverted immorality. 'We think nothing of that,' I was told even by Buddhists. 'Priests are all the same.' 'It is one thing or the other with these fellows.' And when I pressed to know whether the immorality of this priesthood did not lead men to question the truth of the religion, I was told that it made no difference at all. 'It is the life and teachings of Buddha that we follow: the priests are of no account; we do not take any notice of them. If you see a man bow down to a priest in the road or the street, you must always remember that he is paying homage to the yellow robe—the symbol of Buddha's holy life.'

I learned that not one man in a thousand really gives his thought to the Buddhist's ultimate Nirvana. 'Absorption into Universal Being,' I was told, 'is an event so remote and so immensely beyond the merits of ordinary men, that nobody is concerned about it in the very least. The dominant idea with us is so to live that we may secure a decent reincarnation. That is the religion of Buddha. A meritorious life leads to happiness at the next birth; an evil life leads to unhappiness.'

Who can say that here is a likeness to Chris-

tianity? For the heaven of Jesus is to be won by the soul that does good because it loves goodness, and whose love of good springs from its adoration of God. He gives men a Spiritual Father in heaven; He gives them in Himself a Moral Ideal on earth; and He declares that love of God expressed by service to men bestows upon the human heart a joy that cannot be taken away and a peace that passes understanding. 'I am come,' He said, 'that they might have Life, and that they might have it more abundantly.' Surrender your selfish isolation, your lonely particularity, your disturbing ideas of what is due to you, and your individual assertion of your rights; surrender all this, and born again by the revelation of God's Love, long for holiness with all the strength and power of your soul, learn that holiness is service, and you will come to find that in works of mercy and in deeds of love there is a life grander, more joyful, more satisfying, and more abundant than any dark and narrow life of a soul prisoned in the cell of its own existence.

Buddhism is a synonym for Egoism, and not the mere crude and only half-conscious egoism of the materialist, but the concentrated, intense, and wholly conscious egoism of the soul. Buddhism is I Myself thinking of I Myself; Christianity is Christ my Master thinking of Man my Brother. The one promises Annihilation; the other Life.

In the forest village which I have just attempted to describe, and afterwards in Colombo, I met among the Salvationists a remarkable man converted to Christianity from Buddhism whose story will better help the reader to realize the difference between the two religions than many pages of disquisition.

This person, Samaráveera by name, is a tall, thin, romantic-looking man of some forty years of age.

He is lighter-coloured than most Singhalese, has large and handsome eyes, and small features; he wears a moustache and on one side of his forehead his thick black hair hangs over as far as the eyebrow. The high cheek-bones stand out like curves drawn with a pencil, the cheeks are sunken, the long bare neck, with its prominent Adam's apple, is so thin that all the cords are visible. The expression of his face is one of gentle sweetness. His voice is low and modulated. He has the air of a scholar given up to spiritual devotion. He speaks English without the least trace of a foreign accent and has a perfect command of idiom and vocabulary.

'Buddhism,' he said to me, 'must never be regarded as an original and separate religion. It is Hinduism reformed, and is quite as centred in Hinduism as Protestantism, which is reformed Catholicism, is centred in Christianity. The vital principle of each religion is the theory of reincarnation; and both postulate Nirvana, or absorption into the unconscious essence of Being, as the final end of a soul's existence. Buddha denounced Hindu gods, but he spoke of one great Being, and his idea of this Being is much the same if not quite the same as the philosophic Hindu's idea of Brahma. Buddhist Kings have had as many as forty wives; the priests of Buddhism practise immoralities which are common among the priests of Hinduism. The purest form of Buddhism is found in Ceylon, but although the priests do not marry here, as they do in Japan, still it is generally known that they are not virtuous. There are two sects of Buddhism in Ceylon, the Siamese sect, and the Amarapura sect. The priests of the first sect leave one shoulder bare, and represent the worldly and material side of Buddhism; they deal only with high-caste people and

consider themselves an aristocracy. The Amarapura sect cover both shoulders under the yellow robe, are more pious, live purer lives, and go among the low-caste peoples—but with patronage. Both priesthoods exercise a tyrannous power over the people and claim a spiritual sovereignty. In all schools of Buddhist thought, sin is condemned only as an offence against one's neighbour; never as a barrier erected by the soul itself against the love of God.

'The legends about Buddha are just as grotesque as those about Hindu gods. At his birth he is said to have asserted his supremacy over all gods; fresh from his mother's womb he walked seven steps towards north, south, east, and west, and proclaimed himself supreme. But in truth Buddha was a man like other men; he never claimed divine origin, and never said that he was an incarnation of Siva, Vishnu, Brahma, or any other god. He was a good man who saw the sin and suffering of life with pain and sympathy, and he sought to save men from sin and suffering by teaching them to crush in their souls all desire for existence, good or bad, happy or miserable.

'All the books and all the ceremonies of Buddhism are in Pali, which is high Singhalese, a language known only to the priests. Buddhism in this respect is like Roman Catholicism. But the chief condemnation of Buddhism is its powerlessness to recreate a fallen nature or restore a broken life. It is beautiful and sweet as an idea, as a sad and poetic philosophy of paganism; but it is not a religion. If it is a religion, it is inadequate to the world's needs, pitifully inadequate. It is an inefficient religion—therefore it cannot be true. What is not true is not a religion.'

He told me his own story in the following words:—

'My parents were prominent Buddhists, my father being one of the trustees of the temples—that is to say, a manager and controller of finances, for the priests touch no money themselves. Every full-moon day I used to go with my parents to the temple, and I loved to go because my mind was filled with the charm of Buddha's teaching. I thought there could be nothing sweeter in all the ideas of men than Buddha's noble teaching about Kindness. "There is great virtue in Kindness." "The greatest power is Kindness." "Kindness to man and animal." I worshipped in common with all Buddhists, but very devotedly because my heart was so deeply touched by this doctrine of Kindness, the Trinity of my religion—Buddha, his Teaching, and his Disciples. I thoroughly, almost passionately, believed the beautiful doctrines, and like other Buddhists would worship even an immoral priest because he wore the robe that Buddha wore.

'At an early age I was seized by an attack of dysentery which brought me to death's door. My parents in despair sent for the priests. My father said that if I recovered he would dedicate me to the priesthood. The priests came, erected a beautiful altar in my bedroom, filled it with flowers, and for seven days and nights chanted their invocations. They took the sacred string, dipped it in holy water, rubbed saffron on, and tied it round me.

'I recovered, and my father repented of his vow. He thought me clever and refused to let me bury myself in the priesthood. This was a most poignant distress to me. I longed to be a priest. All my thoughts and feelings and hopes and aspirations were set upon the priesthood. But my father withstood all my entreaties, remained firm against the disappointment of the priests, and sent me to the

only school in our neighbourhood, which happened to be a Christian school.

'I must tell you that even as a boy I had a very keen sense of the horror of sin. I felt it to be atrocious and abominable. As I look back now, I can truly say that I was conscious even as a child of the existence of God within me. And I firmly believe that my horror of sin, something far deeper than the Buddhist notion of an offence against one's neighbour, was created in my heart by the Holy Spirit.

'Some of the teachers at the school to which I was now put endeavoured to make a Christian of me. I did not examine the Christian doctrines or even study the life of Jesus; it was enough for me that Christians killed animals. I used to exclaim, "But Christians kill animals!" I felt that to be atrocious. Christians killed birds. How cruel, how dreadful! I hated Christians; or at any rate I despised them. I had always been taught to regard Christians as bad people. Converts to Christianity, I was told, were mere office-seekers, people who wanted to become officials. I had a bad view of the whole thing. One of my uncles had a Bible which he kept and studied diligently for the purpose of controverting Christians—a work on which he prided himself and which gave him a supreme pleasure. Soon after I went to school he gave me a Bible as a present, and said to me, "Don't you ever become a Christian." I said, "No, I never will!"—for I thought Christians the most cruel and degraded people on the earth. When I came to read the Bible I felt that it was an absolute fairy-story. The whole thing seemed to be impossible and absurd. And the death of Christ—a felon's death! I could not get over that. Buddha—the son of a King! Oh, how great

the difference! That the Son of God should perish on the cross, hanged like a criminal between two thieves, struck me as a thing too dreadful to think about, and too unthinkable to be true. Besides, there was in the Bible from beginning to end the idea that God had created the world, a good God, a perfect God, a God all-wise, all-knowing, and all-powerful. But I knew that creation was imperfect. I knew about sorrow and death. It seemed to me as unthinkable to make a good God the creator of a world so full of cruelty, misery, sorrow, and sin as to believe that the Son of God died on a felon's cross between two dreadful thieves.

'But although my teachers at school failed utterly to make a Christian of me, they widened my knowledge, broadened my sympathies, and gave me a different notion of Christian character. As I grew up I felt more and more the conviction of sin in my heart, and was conscious of an unrest which worship of Buddha and devotion to his Teaching could not allay. I was aware in myself of some inarticulate longing for greater holiness and deeper peace, for a more harmonious relation in my soul to the universe surrounding me. I began to realize the beauty of Christ's character and to feel in His Teaching some mystical sweetness that ministered to the sadness and disquiet of my heart. I used to read the four gospels, and think about a God of Love —one all-embracing and merciful Father in heaven Whose creation had been marred by man himself. Then I began to feel guilty, terribly guilty, and the fear of dying in isolation from God took hold of me and made me afraid.

'The only Christians who attracted me were the Salvationists. I was attracted by observing the self-sacrificing lives of these people and their intense

earnestness and simplicity. I was already dimly aware that no ritual or ceremonial, no pomp of worship and no mere acceptance of an idea or a doctrine could give me the peace of which I was in quest. Quite dimly, but still consciously, I felt the need for a change of heart, a new-birth, a complete revolution of being. I do not know if I can make clear to you what I then felt. My thoughts were troubled, my heart was full of unrest, I was conscious of a great loneliness. I wanted Truth. With all my mind and soul I wanted Truth. To be sure of something as absolutely True—this was the hunger and thirst of my whole being. And in this drifting condition, half-believing in a God of Love, and touched by the beautiful Teaching of Jesus, I saw these Salvationists in my neighbourhood, living lives of extreme self-sacrifice, avoiding everything in the nature of ceremonial or formalism, and preaching the religion of Jesus with a devotion which was perhaps my first knowledge of *earnestness*.

'I felt I should like to know more about these people, and began to attend their meetings. Several Buddhists went out of mere curiosity, and my presence attracted no attention. My people thought I was far too intellectual to become a Christian, and they hoped that I should one day distinguish myself either in Government service or as a professional man. The meetings had various effects upon me. Sometimes I was deeply impressed, sometimes I felt chilled and repelled, sometimes I felt how hopeless it all was—to understand the Will of God and discover the truth of things. But the wonderful lives of these people, and the marvellous manner in which they converted wicked and degraded men into good and holy men, had such an attraction for me that I could not resist attending their meetings.

'It was at a special gathering that my illumination came. The European officer made this meeting the occasion for a great searching of the heart, for a pitiless cross-examination of the conscience. As the meeting proceeded I felt myself the victim of a terrible despair. I was a sinner condemned and lost. Of myself I could do nothing. For ever I might struggle and strive, but it would always be the same—unhappiness of heart, doubt of mind, and wretchedness of soul. There was no light in myself to pierce the darkness crowding upon me from every point of the universe. There was no conceivable action possible to me which could make me at peace with the mystery of things. I was in darkness, and I was in ignorance. To die as I was—a stranger to God, a soul seeking of itself to establish peace with God—this would be terrible.

'I was a sinner, and to sinners Jesus had said, *Come unto Me*. I felt that Jesus had power. I could see no other way of escape and deliverance but by Jesus.

'What was I at the moment? A soul arrested by the great central idea of Right and Wrong. To be cleansed from sin, to be purged of misery, to feel myself standing on a rock secure in strength greater than my own and fixed in a holiness infinitely higher than my own—this was my longing. And to whom could I go?—of all the Teachers and Philosophers in history, to whom could I go? To none, save Jesus. He alone teaches how the heart may be cleansed, how the soul may be born again, how the spirit can rest like a little child in the Love of God. But—— The ordeal! I cannot tell you how I shrank from it. My struggle for new-birth, my longing for conversion, all the turmoil of my soul for some new and wonderful thing to happen to

me, was spiritual. And a physical act was required! In that moment of shrinking and recoil, as if he were an angel sent by God direct from the sky, a Salvationist came to me and helped me to decide. I rose from my seat and went forward before the people. I surrendered myself in that moment to God. I knelt trembling, a raw heathen full of darkness, and opened my heart and uttered a prayer for the first time in my life. I rose a new man. I rose to a new world, for a new purpose; and twenty-one years have gone by since that night, so memorable and so wonderful to me, twenty-one years of hard work, unbroken consolation and deepening joy. At the moment of my conversion I felt at rest, suddenly at rest; I was conscious of a delirious sense of victory after the severe struggle, and happy—happy with a strange irradiation of light pervading all my soul, and the feeling of a hope that supported me and lifted me up.'

This man for twenty-one years has been a most devoted Salvationist, working for the Kingdom of God in Ceylon, a man whose influence as a spiritual force is acknowledged both by Europeans and Natives. And that such a man and such a body as the Salvation Army is necessary to Ceylon, let the brief stories related in the next chapter witness.

RESTORATION

THERE are many streets in the midst of Colombo which suggest the comfort and domesticity of an English suburb. Although they are within a few minutes' walk of a sea-front, brilliant shop-windows, factory chimneys, military barracks, Government offices and a Native quarter as Eastern as the Delhi bazaars, they are so shut in by towering trees and so illuminated by their bird-haunted gardens, that one might imagine them as far from the busy city as Sydenham or Finchley from the central roar of London.

In one of these quiet streets there is a red-bricked house standing back from the road which looks as simple and ordinary as any of its neighbours. Nothing marks it as a separate dwelling. There is no plate or board on either of its drive gates or over its porch. It wears the same appearance of languorous calm and uneventful domesticity which characterizes every other house in the long and somnolent street. And yet it is a habitation of tragedy and sorrow beyond the power of human language to express. It is a Rescue Home.

At the back of this house, under a broad veranda where the sun's light enters cooled and greened through a hanging curtain of whispering leaves, I found a party of Singhalese girls, busy with needle-

work while an elderly Native woman read to them from a book. Among these girls was a little child, dressed in a sleeveless white jacket and a red and yellow skirt, whose extreme youth and face of settled suffering and unalterable grief at once moved my pity and awoke my curiosity. She was under twelve years of age. The tiny face, shadowed by clustering dark curls, was dull and sorrowful; there was no brightness in the sullen eyes, no childhood in the tragic little mouth. Her neck was so thin that a child could easily have spanned it with two hands; her arms were little more than skin and bone; under the linen of her jacket the baby breasts only just showed, as a cigarette case shows in a waistcoat pocket. She was a child, and nothing but a child; a child as unformed and immature as an English girl of her own age. And she had come to the Rescue Home from a hospital.

This is her story.

She does not remember a father. In rather sordid poverty but not in actual misery she grew up under the care of her mother, helping in the home and playing in the streets like so many other children in that crowded quarter of the city. At the age of eleven her mother said to her one day: 'I cannot afford to keep you any longer; I have arranged for you to go to work, you will earn money and the people will give you food and clothes.'

That evening the mother took her to a native hotel, and handed her over to the man who had bought her as part of his stock-in-trade. This hotel still stands in Sea Street, near the Fish Market—a vile place in a filthy alley of ugliness and iniquity. The child was too frightened to cry out to her mother not to desert her. Although she had no idea in the world of her true purpose in that evil place she was

stricken with a paralysing terror and wanted to flee from the noisy house and the brutal-faced man who looked her over with scowling eyes. But she felt herself to be powerless, as indeed she was, and followed her master up a flight of crazy stairs to the upper floor. He opened the door of a room, bade her pass in, and told her she might go to sleep. She woke in hell.

For six or seven months she remained a prisoner in this house. There were three other girls to share her misery and her degradation. They were fed on the poorest rice, were given no money, were made to work in the house, and were constantly beaten by their master. Not once in all that time was she allowed to go out of doors. Through the morning she did the laborious housework; from the afternoon to the small hours of the night she was the victim of her master's trade. And the men who visited this house were the lowest pariahs of the place—loathsome and abominable coolies, drunken and diseased sailors, the filth and offscourings of a Native quarter in a seaport town.

Towards the end of her imprisonment, this child just over eleven years of age, was smitten by one of the most terrible diseases with which nature punishes an intemperate animalism. It became so bad at last that her master himself took her to the hospital, claimed to be her owner, and said he would come back to fetch her when she was cured.

One of the women doctors in this hospital, taking an interest in the child, gradually got her story from her, and at once sent to the Salvationist in charge of the Rescue Home. The two women, both of them practical saints of the twentieth century, determined to save the child body and soul. For five weeks she received all the love and care and science of the

hospital, and from the hospital she passed to the love and care and science of the Rescue Home. The man who had bought her came twice to the hospital and demanded to have the child restored to him; he had paid for her and she belonged to him; he actually attempted to threaten the hospital with proceedings at law.

But the child was safe from this monster, and she is likely to remain safe for the rest of her life. In the Rescue Home she has become the pet and fondling of the other girls, she is adored by the officers in charge, and slowly—very slowly, of course—she is building up the shattered strength of her body and the ruined fabric of her mind. Often the poor little creature will be found weeping silently and secretly; often she will accuse herself of being slow and stupid at her work; and sometimes even to the loving people watching over her restoration with such tender solicitude, it seems as though she will never be able to rid her mind of its terrible nightmare of the past. But one of the Native Salvationists, who is in charge of the needlework class and who reads to the girls while they are busy with their needles, said to me as she caressed this little child with all the affection of a mother—'She is praying and improving.'

Among the girls seated in the green light of the veranda busy with needlework, was one somewhat older than the others; a handsome and capable young woman, whose story I learned partly from herself and partly from the Native Salvationist in charge of the establishment.

She was a village girl, the daughter of humble peasants, and, until disaster overtook her, had spent all her life in the simple surroundings of the little mud house which they called their home. At this

time she was a tall and gracefully-formed girl, past the shapelessness of childhood and not yet a fully-matured woman.

One day there came to the door of their village house a venerable old man peddling various articles of the household. As he talked to the mother, he studied the girl, and presently he asked if the mother could spare the child, 'for,' said he, 'I know of a lady in Colombo who wants an ayah—a fine house and the wages are fifteen rupees a month.'

To the villagers of Ceylon, I discovered, the name of 'Colombo' has the same magic which Paris has for so many French provincials. It is to them a fairy-land of blinding splendour and inexhaustible delight. They see it as a city of enchantment, sparkling with myriads of lamps, ringing with music, and crowded from morning to night with men and women dressed like Kings and Queens. Little village children tell each other stories about this magic city of Colombo; young girls dream about it; and young men do not rest until they have been there.

'When I heard him say Colombo,' the girl told me, 'I felt so excited that I could not speak. Oh, it seemed to me too wonderful to be true! It was more wonderful than the fifteen rupees a month, which seemed to me like a fortune. I had always longed to see Colombo, so that I had often dreamed about it, but I never thought that my dreams would come true.'

The mother, dazzled by the fortune so suddenly presented to her daughter, parted with the child, and that very day, without inquiry of any kind, the venerable pedlar and the young girl started for Colombo. They reached the city at night, and leaving the railway station, made their way into the

narrow and bewildering streets of Slave Island. The old man explained to the wondering girl that it was too late to go that night to the lady's house, and said that he would take her to a nice quiet hotel where she could rest till the morning. He stopped before the door of an evil-looking house, and bidding the girl wait for him, went inside by himself. After a few minutes he returned and conducted the girl into the interior, where he presented her to the proprietor. 'It may be a day or two before I can come back and take you to the lady's house,' he said, in farewell, 'but you must wait here till I come and fetch you.' Then he departed, never of course to return.

After some three or four days the landlord came to her and asked if she had money to pay her bill. She had nothing. He became angry; but, when she cried, he told her that he would not hand her over to the police. 'You must work to pay me back for your food and lodging,' he told her, and she was set to cook food and to scrub floors.

There were several women in this house and their manner of living soon came to the knowledge of the country girl. They received from their visitors presents of cigarettes and cigars, clothes and a little cheap jewellery, but no money. From each of their visitors the landlord got what he could—any sum from five rupees to fifteen—six shillings and eightpence to a sovereign. For this, he fed them, gave them lodging, and treated them with a constant brutality. His house was their prison, and he was their jailer.

The country girl found herself as completely a prisoner as the others. She was not allowed to leave the house, and was carefully watched by her master or his hirelings when her work took her near the door or the windows overlooking the street. For

three days she was driven and harried at this housework till her body was fatigued to the point of exhaustion and her heart almost broken by despair. On the night of the third day she became like the other girls in the house.

She remained a prisoner for a whole year, her one attempt to escape being easily frustrated and most cruelly punished. At the end of this time she was obliged to go into the Lock Hospital, suffering from the same disease as the child in the last story.

She responded at once to the kindness of doctors and nurses, and showed a most intelligent interest in the ministrations of the Salvationists. She said to them, 'I do not understand all you tell me, but I want to be good; if you will let me, I should like to go into your home.' Every Thursday a Salvationist paid her a visit, and gradually the poor unhappy creature came into the soothing and re-creating atmosphere of religion. Towards the end of her period in hospital, a woman from the brothel came to see her. She sprang out of bed at sight of this visitor, rushed to the bathroom, and locked herself in. When they were able to assure her of protection and she was induced to open the door, she told them that she would a thousand times rather die in the hospital than go back to the brothel. They promised to save her from the clutches of her tyrants, and in a few weeks' time she was taken to the Home. Nearly four years have passed since that day. She is now one of the most enthusiastic workers for her suffering sisters, and every other Sunday pays a visit either to the Lock Hospital or the Jail with the message of Christianity. In the Rescue Home she is like an angel to the other girls, and is entrusted with work, and helps them to forget the haunting contagion of their past lives.

She told me that the majority of bad women in Ceylon are without shame, and manifest no longing to be good. The Eurasian women are the worst. Many of the brothels are kept by German women, who employ agents all over the island to get them children of twelve years of age. The police of Ceylon constantly come to the Salvation Army with girls who have been ruined by these procuresses.

Another story shows another aspect of this rescue work. A Singhalese Christian girl, twenty-nine years of age, charming in manner, and pleasant to look upon, is the sad heroine of this different tale. During an absence of her parents from home, she became as weak as water in the hands of a philandering cousin, and finally yielded to him. For nearly four months she hid her secret, and then it was discovered by her mother. In a few minutes the house was in an uproar. The mother stormed at her, the father beat her without mercy, and finally she was thrown out of the house and told never again to darken its door.

The miserable girl wandered away to the houses of relations, but in every case met with scorn and derision. No one would take her in. Everybody upbraided her. At last, in despair, she made her way from the villages into the jungle, and there for a whole week wandered aimlessly to and fro, broken-hearted, terrified, starving, and despairing. It seemed to her that all the world was against her, that nowhere under heaven was there pity for her condition. But she was young, she was strong, and the passion to live was vigorous in her blood. Hunger drove her out from the jungle, and she set her face towards a village. She was now thin, ragged, and wild-looking. Children eyed her askance, women watched her with suspicion, some

of the men mocked her. However here and there she found a person to give her a little handful of rice, and at night she would lie down and sleep in the shadow of a friendly doorway. It was better than the jungle.

Her condition was soon obvious to all the world. Instead of creating pity in the heart of humanity it only intensified mocking and scorn. She was no longer a woman, she was a pariah dog. They hunted her away from their doors with bitter words and wounding taunts. Now and then food was given to her, but never a kind word. It was 'Take and begone' from village to village, till she felt herself hated and loathed by all mankind.

At last she encountered something in the nature of kindness. A woman at whose door she had begged a little rice, said to her: 'You should go to Colombo. There are some Christians down there who call themselves Salvationists and who look after people like you. They will take you into one of their houses. You had better go to them at once. It will soon be too late.'

With this crumb of comfort for her despairing soul, the miserable girl tramped all the way with her grievous burden to Colombo, and asked for the Salvation Army. In a few minutes the whole aspect of her life was changed. From being a pariah she found herself treated with the most endearing kindness and stimulated by words of strong and bracing encouragement. They carried her to the hospital, and when her baby was born, it was adopted by one of the Salvationists. She entered the Rescue Home for a week, and when her strength was recovered, she set out to return to her home.

Now that she was no longer a scandal, now that the child was born and taken from her, she hoped

that her parents would receive her with love and let her be as one of the other children. But no sooner had she entered her home than they flew at her with reproaches. They brought back the past, they struck her across the face with their hands, and they called her wasa-ganya—the word that stings a pure woman. It was impossible for her to stay. Very sorrowfully, with tears in her eyes and a most bitter agony in her heart, the unhappy creature turned away from her home, and homeless, parentless, friendless, once more an outcast on the face of the earth, went out into the world which is so cruel to all and so perilous for lonely women. But this time she knew that there was one place where doors would be open to her, where a kind welcome would greet her, and where she might live as a human being.

It is now over six years since she returned to the Rescue Home in Ceylon, and all those years have been marked by a wonderful deepening of her spiritual life. She was described to me as 'admirable'—a girl who was always happy, always kind to others, always energetic at her work, and always grateful to those who befriended her. But for the Salvationists, but for that always open door of the Salvation Army, she must have ended her life in the horror and ruin of depravity. 'Her father and mother,' I was told, 'are grateful now, are sorry for what they did in the past, and always give her a kind welcome when she goes to see them.'

Other stories I heard in the Rescue Home, equally tragic, equally hopeful, and equally illuminating; but these three are perhaps sufficient to give the reader an idea of the need for a real and saving religion in the island of Ceylon. Buddhism does absolutely nothing for the fallen, and has little strength for the falling. The climate of the island, the presence

of a large number of young unmarried European men, the lightness and the flippancy with which purity is everywhere apt to be regarded in an age of perishing superstition and triumphing materialism, make it essential for the health of the Singhalese people, and in particular for the happiness of Singhalese girls, that religion in its high aspect of a noble morality should be constantly in evidence throughout the length and breadth of Ceylon.

If I may venture to express an opinion on the difficult question of government—I would say that more power should be given to the police to visit the innumerable brothels of the big towns, that the work of the native procurer and the German procuress should be brought to a stop, and that the severest punishment allowed by the law should be meted out to any man or any woman who is keeping children against their will in houses of immorality. It is not easy to make war on vice, but to make no war at all is to be guilty of a crime.

THE BHILS

THE more clearly we come to see that civilized man is not a fallen angel but an ascending creature of barbaric ancestry, the more interested we are likely to become in those races of the earth who still preserve for us in their manners, customs, and superstitions the earliest chapters in the history of our strange and eventful progress.

It is intelligible enough that a gentleman in England should wish to know about his great-great-grandfather, or that a lady in Rome should spend a considerable part of her life in convincing the little group of her acquaintance that one of her ancestors was a nobleman. But such archæology is but the toying of the nursery in comparison with that larger interest in our antiquity which carries the mind back to the very beginning of human emergences. For there is not a single custom or manner or superstition of primitive peoples which does not hold a taper to the darkness and mystery of our own complex society and our own individual region of perplexing consciousness. The most modern European may find in the habits of a single aboriginal tribe still inhabiting the world and still living the entirely ignorant and absolutely superstitious life which preceded the rise of the Pharaohs and the birth of Greek philosophy, an explanation of strange stirrings and

dim motions which haunt the chambers of his brain and trouble his soul with an inexplicable persistence.

The vast continent of India is a monument to the everlastingness of superstition. From the most refined and philosophic Brahman down to the most degraded Untouchable, this immense congeries of humanity, this fifth of the entire human race, is governed from birth to death by a wand of superstition to which the rod of Nero or the scourge of the Inquisition was but as a snapping twitch. And among these various peoples of India, but separated from them as utterly as the sand of the Plains from the waves of the Indian Ocean, there are tribes and races of mankind still more ignorant, still more superstitious, and still more primitive, who have never been absorbed by the comparatively advanced civilization of Hinduism and who preserve for us in all the freshness and vivid power of actual life the most barbarous manners and the most savage superstitions of remotest antiquity.

In certain districts of India these strange and separate peoples are termed 'Criminal Tribes'; in others they are merely docketed as aborigines. For the most part they live the nomadic life of gypsies, and get their living by bow and arrow, by fish-hook, by spear, by intimidation, and by stealing. They have been from the earliest times of the British occupation a thorn in the side of Government, and a costly thorn in particular to the estimates of those provinces in which they live and maintain a stubborn resistance to honest work and the morality of the Ten Commandments. 'It is men of this class,' says Sir Bamfylde Fuller, 'who are said to be able to steal a man's bedclothes off him. The tribes are kept under close supervision, and efforts are made to reclaim them, but without much success. The

best use that can be made of men of this class is to enlist them as village watchmen. They are, as a rule, faithful to their salt, and they are exceedingly skilful detectives. They will trace a stolen bullock by its footprints for miles across country.' He tells a story which will help the reader to realize the marvellous genius of these simple and ignorant people in the province of crime:—

> An acquaintance of mine, who had lived for some time in the cantonments of Cawnpore, shifted his residence to the civil station, a mile or two distant, and amongst his other servants took his watchman with him. A few days later, he received an anonymous letter pointing out that the watchmen of the cantonment were not of the same community as those of the civil station, and advising him to engage a new man. He thought little of it, so it was decided to use a more forceful argument. It was the hot weather, and, as usual, he slept out of doors. Waking one morning, he was amazed to see all his drawing-room pictures swinging from the branches of the tree above him: within the bungalow a party of 'ragging' undergraduates might have been enjoying themselves: the furniture was turned upside down. His bureau stood wide open. Money had not been touched, but his stock of postage-stamps had been taken, and was neatly disposed around the edge of the lawn, on each stamp a pebble, so that it might not be blown away. He made no more ado about changing his watchman. (*Studies of Indian Life and Sentiment*, p. 284.)

Sir Edmund Cox has lately told in his book, *Police and Crime in India*, a story which shows how the extraordinary ingenuity of the Indian

criminal is combined with a most reckless contempt of human life.

> A party of thieves one night broke into the house of a banker named Girwar Prasad. They effected their entrance by digging a hole through one of the outer walls with a short, sharp-pointed iron bar. The thieves had collected their plunder and were departing, when Girwar Prasad awoke, heard a noise, and ran down. He entered the room just in time to see the last of the thieves crawling out through the hole; his legs were still inside. With great presence of mind the banker ran forward and forced himself between them. The thief was now caught. With his legs separated he could not get out, and with his arms and shoulders beyond the wall, neither could he force himself back.
>
> Girwar Prasad summoned his servants and sent for the police. Meanwhile he remained exultant; through this thief the rest would be apprehended, and his property recovered. But in this he was disappointed. So soon as the other thieves found that their comrade was fixed in the hole they took measures to prevent his betraying them. They drew their swords, cut off his head, and carried it off together with their plunder. The police, on their arrival, found only a bleeding neck protruding from the hole, and a body that no one could identify.

How barbarous some of these people are may be gathered from such information as Sir Bamfylde Fuller gives of the head-hunting Nágas. 'No man,' he says, 'can expect a nice girl to marry him unless he can show her a ghastly trophy; and, so brutalized are human feelings, that heads of women and even

of little children count for as much as the head of a warrior; indeed, they count for more, as to kill a woman or child a man has to venture himself well inside the land of the hostile village.' Then there are the Aghoris who are actually said to eat human bodies:—

> I came across one of them who lived on a sand-bank in the Ganges, and arrested the corpses which floated down-stream. Carrying a human skull, they blackmail shopkeepers by threatening to throw it upon their stalls, and to pollute irretrievably their stock-in-trade. . . . There are actually ten thousand persons who at Census time classed themselves as Aghoris. All of them do not practise cannibalism, and some of them attempt to rise in the world. One of them secured service as cook with a British officer of my acquaintance. My friend was in camp in the jungle with his wife and children, when his other servants came to him in a body and refused to remain in service unless the cook was dismissed, since they had discovered, they declared, that during the night time he visited cemeteries and dug up the bodies of freshly buried children. (*Studies of Indian Life and Sentiment*, pp. 44, 45.)

Now, among all these various peoples of India who are reckoned as something worse than untouchable by the orthodox Hindu, there are tribes here and there whose superstitions are gross but not abominable, and whose criminal instincts do not greatly exceed the rather poetic pillaging of the English poacher. These tribes, while they rank above the cannibals and head-hunters of other districts, retain all the most primitive customs and superstitions of antiquity, and at the same time

manifest a certain inclination towards the English influence. Such a people, for instance, are the Doms, the Haburas and the Bhils, among whom, thanks very largely to the courage and sagacity of the greatest British statesman now in India, the Salvation Army is beginning a work of remarkable promise for civilization. Centuries of unspeakable tyranny, and many years of an iron supervision by the police, have made these people sullen and suspicious; but one cannot go amongst them in their settlements and villages, or visit them in the prisons where so many of them are incarcerated, without feeling that the Salvationists have set their hands to a work of the most romantic character and that here, perhaps, more than in any other quarter of the world a student of human nature may actually stand and watch the rise of the soul from the very depths of animalism to the faint beginnings of spiritual existence.

The Bhils are said by the *Encyclopædia Britannica* to be 'the remnants of a Mongolian race which first displaced a yet earlier Negroid population, and was then itself shouldered out by a Caucasian irruption.' These people living shoulder by shoulder with the most advanced civilization of modern times, bear in their patient faces all the marks of this immemorial antiquity. They have the worn and weary look of travellers who have come a long journey, and on that journey have seen such sights and experienced such adventures as have destroyed in their souls for evermore the faculty of wonder. They are a tired, a quiet, and a conservative people. Although under the influence of the British power they have ceased to be marauders, they still cling to their bow and arrows; and although they have adopted from the Hindus the practice of burning dead bodies, they

still keep a link with their past by burying the dead bodies of women.* Peaceful cultivators of the soil and good soldiers, they remain as primitive and as separate and as superstitious as those far-off ancestors who poured into India before the dawn of history and drove the horde of savage negroes into the distant south.

A story of their courage and endurance was told to me by a Salvationist doctor. The rivers are infested with turtles, and sometimes a crocodile makes his appearance; when a half-cooked corpse is taken from the fire and flung into the river, the turtles swarm round it and begin to eat, until with a smashing sound like a crack of thunder a crocodile's tail scatters the turtles and the crocodile takes possession of the corpse. An unfortunate Bhil on one occasion was grabbed by a crocodile, the sharp teeth locking in the man's leg. Before he could be dragged away, four of his friends seized him, and then began a tug-of-war which resulted in a victory for humanity. The man, with his leg torn and lacerated beyond description, was brought fifteen miles in a burning sun to the Salvation Hospital, and underwent amputation without a murmur. The doctor was then implored to return with his rifle and shoot the crocodile. The wailing of women, counterfeiting a funeral, attracted the crocodile. He raised his head from the water and the doctor shot him. A tremendous festival of joy celebrated this event; and the man recovered.

* This fact I learn from the *Encyclopædia Britannica*; but I was told by a European who has lived with the Bhils for something like a quarter of a century that burying is only resorted to when there is not sufficient wood for burning. I was not then aware of the information contained in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and did not ask whether any difference is made between the dead bodies of men and women. Mr. Edgar Thurston tells me that women, being of small account, are generally buried instead of burned, to avoid trouble and expense.

I learned from contact with these people that they believe in no god, but that the crops induce them to bestow upon the earth the title of a goddess—Mata, or Mother Earth. Although they may fairly be described as atheists they are yet firmly convinced of the soul's persistence after death, and hold in common with nearly all savage and primitive peoples the doctrine of reincarnation. They believe that the soul goes somewhere after death, and has the power to return and afflict the living. Particularly do they fear the returning spirits of a father-in-law or a mother-in-law. Devil-dancers, who enjoy great respect among these people, are more often called upon to exorcise the incarnating spirits of these two relations, who so frequently figure in the comic drolleries of more civilized people, than any other spirits, except an extremely malignant female devil, named Dàkan. Should a person fall sick, and the devil-dancer fail to get rid of Dàkan, who has caused the illness, a Bhil family will move their hut—perhaps a whole village will move—in order to escape the haunting spirit. Death itself is attributed to this devil. A person would never die but for the enmity of Dàkan. Some spirit of good is supposed to preside over human life, probably Mata, the Earth Mother, and when a person dies the Bhil says that the devil has triumphed over this good spirit.

They are far from being vegetarians. They not only eat flesh food, even the flesh of lizards, but they cheerfully consume the dead body of any animal found in the jungle. They have no scruples on this head and hold that a man is free to take, kill, and eat anything that he finds pleasant to the taste and nourishing to his physical vigour.

Custom allows each man as many wives as he is fool enough to saddle himself with, but in practice

one man finds one wife comfort enough. Girls marry when they are about eighteen years of age, and young men at twenty or twenty-four. The marriage ceremony is one of high importance. The bridegroom in his home and the bride in hers colour themselves saffron, not only on the legs and feet, and face and hands, but all over their garments. For seven or ten nights each household keeps music going from sunset to midnight—the bride sitting sideways on the shoulder of a young man, one leg over his chest and one over his back, and the bridegroom actually performing the same gymnastic on the shoulder of one of the girls who is a guest in his house. As a conclusion to this junketing, the relations and invited guests bring presents of money—the union of a man and woman always being considered an occasion for co-operation among relatives and their more intimate friends On the following day the bridegroom is brought with music to the bride's house, carrying money in his hand for the bride's father. A sham quarrel immediately takes place. The father of the bride says that the money is not sufficient; the bridegroom swears that it is a deal too much; voices rise to the pitch of clamour, language becomes orientally florid, and just when it seems that skulls must be cracked and faces scratched, the friends of the bridegroom carry him off some two or three fields away. Here they remain, discussing how well or how ill the scene has been acted, until the male relations of the bride arrive in force to carry him back, after a pretence of conflict. Arrived in the bride's house, the headman of the village, or the oldest relation places a little raw sugar in the mouths of the bridegroom and bride, joins their hands together, and in the same breath that he declares them man and wife demands his fee

of one rupee. The young men now seize the newly-married wife and carry her off to the bridegroom's house, where they feast together; then they carry her back to the house of her parents, and depart with joy. At any moment after this transaction, the bridegroom is free to go and fetch his wife—but he is expected to bring presents for her family.

In the case of a poor man, they have to resort to the Biblical expedient of working seven years for the bride as a servant of her father: but during these seven years the bridegroom cohabits with his wife, and a man often has five cheerful children when he goes out from the house of his father-in-law, a free man and at last a married man. There is also another arrangement, a third marriage system: a man will pay down five or ten rupees for his wife, on the undertaking of her parents that this sum of money (6*s*. 8*d*. or 13*s*. 4*d*.) shall be faithfully returned if the lady should prove unsuitable; or it may be that the sum of money is paid every year, like the rent of a house or the hire of a piano.

There are said to be some three millions of these people, and in the sandy country of the Panch Mahals you see them going through the jungle with their bows and arrows, nearly naked, like little creatures in the charming fantasies of Arthur Rackham. The bowstring is a slice of cane, but they are so practised in stealing stealthily upon their prey that they do not need a far-carrying engine of destruction. And the bow and arrow is very often carried merely as the London clerk carries a cane in the underground railway—as a decoration, or a companion for the hand. The Bhils for the most part are cultivators.

A Bhil generally sleeps in the fields or on the veranda of his house. The house, built of teak poles

and bamboo branches plastered with mud, is occupied by the women, the children, and the animals —buffaloes for ploughing, goats for milk, and fowls for eggs. The centre of the floor is usually the fireplace, a small altar ot stones on which dried cow-dung serves as fuel. The man rises when ' the yellow starts in the sky '—their own phrase for the dawn— and smoking his huge and unwieldy hookah filled with rude country-grown tobacco sprouts, starts out for the fields. Before ' the yellow starts in the sky ' the cock crows, and at that clarion the wife gets up from the floor of the house and begins to grind the Indian corn for the day's needs. She then milks the cows; and the children, sometimes only four years of age, go forth with the cattle to forest or to field. At eleven o'clock the man returns from his weeding or ploughing, and he and the woman sit down to eat. The meal consists as a rule of Indian corn in the form of bread or boiled in butter-milk; if there are no vegetables, salt is added, but salt is never used when vegetables appear in the bill-of-lading—that would be far too great a luxury. After this repast, the woman goes out to work in the fields and does not return till five in the evening. They are only busy during seed-time and harvest, but two crops in the year mean that their times of slackness are never prolonged.

A farm of eight acres is an average size, and the rent is about twelve annas an acre, all taxes included. But this rent of a shilling an acre is increased by the unjustifiable exactions of Native policemen and the petty tax-collectors called talatis, which the British Government labour so courageously to stop. Each Bhil, for instance, takes it in turn to give a fowl to the policeman, and those who have no fowls must needs buy one. It is never well to fall out with the

least of policemen or the smallest of petty tax-collectors. 'Their right hand is full of bribes.' The Bhil is further harried by forced labour. His bullocks and his carts are pressed into the service of his Hindu masters, and he is made to carry wood, to clean up police stables, or to do his share of night-watching without recompense of any kind. For instance, when all the people fled from Dohad in the time of plague the Bhils were forced to go into the town and act as watchmen. I asked an old Bhil what his people thought about these things. He smiled, spread his hands, and humped his shoulders. 'It is the Government, the Government; and we must do it.' There was no more to be said. 'If we do not do these things,' he said, 'we are beaten by the police; it is better to do them.' Needless, of course, to say, that the British Government, far from countenancing this time-honoured oppression, does all in its power to end it.

Theoretically the Bhil is a small farmer, but in fact he is only the labourer of the sankar, the money-lender, to whom every year his crops are mortgaged. The Bhil is ignorant of accounts, and the kind sankar does all this difficult work for him—even arranging the matter of taxes. The Bhil usually agrees to pay fifty per cent, but it is probable that he pays a hundred per cent. The sankar allows him to take what he needs from the crops, and generally leaves a little standing in the ground. The sankar is rich; the Bhil is poor.

I inquired what the Bhils thought of this existence ruled by a money-lender. 'We are happy,' I was told, and then, after a pause, 'but, there is a feeling.' Apparently, so long as they have food, they are content. No people in the world, I was told, think less of to-morrow. And of all the people

in India I was told they are the most moral as regards sexual matters. If a girl goes wrong, according to them, she is got rid of; if for some reason she is allowed to stay, the man is made to marry her. This law is inexorable. They have a curious custom that a girl who has never given birth to children must wear white cloth over her breasts; the gorgeous colours beloved of all Indian women for their breast-cloths are only allowed by the Bhils to those women who have borne children. The women wear great coarse bangles of brass on their legs, reaching from the ankle almost to the knee; they are fond of jewellery, which they wear in their noses and lips, as well as in their ears and around their heads. For a bridegroom to kiss his bride in her gala attire must be very like, one would think, thrusting the lips through an ironmonger's shop—a clattering and a metallic kiss, not pretty, but no doubt exhilarating after the feasting, dancing, and artificial brawls of the marriage ceremony.

In the town of Dohad, at the house of a Swedish Salvationist, I had a long conversation with a venerable Bhil who for nineteen years has lived the life of a Christian and been a considerable force on the side of civilization and progress among these primitive people. This old ebony-coloured fellow, under his shabby pink-coloured turban with its faded red ribbon bearing the title Mukti-Fauj, which means Salvation Army, sloping down towards the right eye, presented a curious appearance. The long Semitic nose hung far over the upper lip; the mouth, depressed at the right corner, curled high up at its left extremity, leaving two long horse teeth, half yellow and half red with betel juice, exposed to view; these protruding teeth pressed upon the lower lip, which stretched right across the face and lost

itself in iron-grey whiskers of a straggling mutton-chop order; the face, narrow at the chin, was exceedingly broad over the prominent cheek-bones; the eyes were large and handsome, the whites like porcelain, the brown iris clouded by a bluish haze, the lashes dark and thick; and the entire countenance was covered with fine wrinkles and marked by deep lines, hollow cheeks, and heavy bags under the eyes.

While he squatted on the ground, watching me with an unmistakable scrutiny, the immense mouth performed amazing evolutions in the business of chewing betel-nut, while the withered and claw-like hands plucked spasmodically at the folds of the dhoti in his lap. A little group of young men, one of them his son, watched the interview on the veranda from the dusty yard filled with bullock-carts; and the old fellow constantly flashed a glance in their direction, a nonchalant and rather swaggering glance, as much as to say, 'You see what a great person I am; a Sahib from England has come to hear about our people and it is from me that he seeks his information.'

Kushal-Kangi, to give him his honourable name, was at one time a devil-dancer, and was famous for the passion of his frenzy and his power over evil spirits throughout the Panch Mahals. He would be fetched with pomp and circumstance to villages afflicted by misfortune or to houses in which a person had suddenly been seized by a demon or stricken down with illness. He would dance, to the increasing fury of the local musicians, until the sweat poured from him, his eyes started from his head, and he was so elevated that he could command the devil to go out or the fever to be still.

I asked him whether he truly believed in those

days that devils did take possession of people and that he himself had a genuine power over them in his ecstasy as a devil-dancer.

He smiled and shook his head. 'I never believed in anything of that kind,' he answered. 'I was a devil-dancer for food and for respect. It was an easy life. It amused me. It gave me the sense of power which I found agreeable. I did not believe in devils.'

One day, nineteen years ago now, the Swedish Salvationist in whose house I was resting at Dohad, came into the village of Ablod and there met Kushal-Kangi. He was impressed by the Bhil's intelligence, questioned him, and found that he did not believe in devils or credit himself with supernatural power. As they sat at meat together, for Kushal-Kangi had offered the invading stranger the hospitality of his house, the Salvationist said to him point blank, 'If you do these things, in which you do not believe, you are a hypocrite.'

He then spoke to him about Christianity, and placing his hands on the Bhil's head prayed that God would enlighten his soul, cleanse his heart, and make him a messenger to his people.

'That was the start of it,' said Kushal-Kangi, addressing my host. 'You put your hands on my head, and you prayed to God. I felt that if it was true I must worship. It was as if something outside me was saying to me, "It is true: it is perfectly true; there is a God, and He is good." I felt that if God was good, I must certainly worship Him, and obey Him. But was it true? Well, I thought it was true; it seemed true; and there was a strong feeling from outside me that it really was true.'

I asked him what had most struck him in the

message of the Salvationist. He answered, 'That God was good.' It was no illumination to him that there was a God, he really did not very much care whether there was a God or not; but that there was a good God, a God Who was perfect love and perfect virtue and perfect holiness, this seemed to him such a wonderful and beautiful idea that he wanted to worship such a God immediately.

It is curious how the instinct to worship manifested itself instantly in this man who had never visualized a Supreme Being and who had never prayed. We have for so long a period come to regard prayer as a supplication for mercy and an agonized entreaty for help and succour, that we have almost altogether lost the higher, calmer, and far more beautiful form of communion with the Father of Creation which is expressed in worship. The spirit which overflows in a glittering minstrelsy from the skylark's throat, and which comes to us in the splendid music of an organ, or in the highest poetry of Wordsworth, is the spirit of outpouring and ecstatic worship—adoration of the Ultimate, the Everlasting, and the Beautiful. Prayer with the majority of Christians, on the other hand, is something sad, mournful, and sombre—a spirit nowhere to be found in Nature and, so far as I am aware, unknown among primitive peoples.

Kushal-Kangi was confident in his assertion that the first conviction which came to his soul was the joyful and liberating desire to worship this good God. He told me that he went away to the forest, escaped from the village, freed himself from contact with humanity, and there, on his knees, offered the adoration of his heart to this new idea of a God Who was good. It seemed to him, instantly and immediately, not only the right thing to do, but the happy

thing to do. He was, as it were, transported by a lovely and a perfectly beautiful idea.

But he was conscious of no effect from his prayer. He had offered worship to God in the hope that such a God might exist, not in the sure knowledge of that sublime Existence. He rose from his knees troubled and perplexed, but not discomfited. On his return he knelt down again, and prayed in the jungle that if a good God existed the truth of that Existence might be made known to him. Some of the villagers saw him on his knees and ran back to the village with the news that Kushal-Kangi had turned Muhamadan. He rose again from his knees, and still unconscious of certainty, returned to the village. As soon as he entered his house, his children regarding him with wonder, he knelt down for the third time and prayed for the manifestation of a good God.

'At that moment,' he said, 'I felt God enter my soul. I was possessed by God. There was no doubt about it. And so I believed. I believed in Him after I felt He had done me good.'

By the feeling of 'good' he means a feeling of happiness. It was to him, this conversion, a liberating and a joyful experience, a translation from darkness to light, an uprising from sickness to health. But as the days passed, he felt that he had not got all the good and blessing out of this new light in his soul. He wanted to be happier still; he wanted to lose himself utterly in deeper ecstasies of joy.

One day he was working in the fields when he felt himself called to serve God just as if a voice had spoken at his ear. Straightway he drove his buffaloes back to the homestead, and started off on the eight-mile walk to the house of the Swedish Salvationist.

'I want to join you,' he said; 'I want to become a Christian.' 'Why have you come to us?' he was asked. 'Jesus has led me,' he replied; 'I feel that He is leading me to bring my own people to God.' He was accepted as a Salvationist, and returned to his village to begin his extraordinary work of conversion among the Bhils.

But at the beginning he was subjected to persecution. The headman of the village called a meeting and excommunicated Kushal-Kangi for becoming a Christian. To be outcasted among the Bhils meant in those days that the guilty person could neither smoke with others nor eat with others. This sentence of isolation could always be turned aside by the gift of a goat to the headman, but Kushal-Kangi as a Christian would not stoop to a bribe, and as a Christian he determined to make war upon the laws of caste.

Now, among the Bhils, parents are greatly respected, it is almost their only religion. The eldest son of a family is called dada by his brothers and sisters, which means 'father,' and is treated with considerable reverence. When a man marries, the eldest brother of his bride becomes his father-in-law as well as the actual father of the bride. An eldest son, in fact, is treated from the day of his birth in a manner which educates him for the high office of parent, so that the tradition of reverence for age and respect for parents may never fall into contempt.

Well, Kushal-Kangi was the head of a very large family, and soon after he had been thrown out of caste by the headman, he sent far and wide and summoned all the members of this huge family to a conclave. At this conclave Kushal-Kangi asked his family to show their resentment of the insult put

upon their chief by the headman, and demanded that they should outcaste the headman, condemn *him* to pay the fine, and refuse to admit him into caste until he had provided food for the whole village. The dutiful assembly agreed to these proposals without a dissentient voice, and the judge of Kushal-Kangi found himself flung out of caste by a handsome majority.

It was this historic action of Kushal-Kangi which settled the caste question among the Bhils—a truly interesting and striking occurrence.

By the manner of his changed life, by the eloquence of his preaching, and his untiring kindness to those in sorrow and distress, Kushal-Kangi has done an extraordinary work for Christianity among a people whom it is really as difficult to tear away from their immemorial superstitions as to wrench a screw from a steel plate. For these Bhils are of so great an antiquity that they are almost without any sense of curiosity, without any desire for betterment, and without any instinct of worship. As they bear the oppression of their Hindu tyrants, patiently and without a murmur of complaint, so they accept life as they find it and lift not a finger to make it happier or better. But Kushal-Kangi can point to the last Census returns and show that 209 people in his village registered themselves as Christians, while many others among them are Christians, but, fearing the Hindus, have failed to confess the fact to a Government servant. For nearly sixteen years he has been an officer in the Salvation Army, and his village, over which he rules with the authority of a King, is known far and wide as the most virtuous, law-abiding, and happy community throughout the Panch Mahals.

Although in sexual matters moral enough, and as

a rule a kind and easy-going people, the Bhils have absolutely no control over their tempers and in drink or in anger are careless of any consequences. Murder is often committed in the Panch Mahals, murder of which the Government seldom hears, and violent explosions of rage lead frequently to feuds of the fiercest and most blood-thirsty character. But even quarrels and domestic brawls are unknown in the village of Kushal-Kangi, and his influence is slowly widening with that of the British Government throughout the Bhil country, making for gradual progress, enlightenment, and virtue throughout the Panch Mahals.

I went with Fakir Singh on one occasion to a jungle village, fourteen miles from the little town of Dohad, miles and miles away from soldiers and police, and miles away from the presence of a Government official. As we stood on a bare hill, looking down into the gloom of desolate valleys, and far away to the violet mists of the horizon, where the sun had gone down in scarlet suddenness, the Fakir said to me: 'What a wonderful thing is this Pax Britannica! Here we are in a jungle country, among a heathen people ignorant of God and acknowledging no code of Christian morals, and we are perfectly safe—a few Salvationist missionaries surrounded on all sides by thousands of savages! There has been nothing quite like it in the world before.'

THE DOMS

It is a unanimous opinion in India that Sir John Hewett, the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, stands first among the little group of able men directing the government of India.

In a vast province so perfectly governed that treason is almost unknown and even famine is handled with so sure a hand that the mortality is negligible, the presence of savage and lawless people roving about the country to the terror of the peaceful and the ceaseless anxiety of the police, was felt by Sir John Hewett to be an anachronism too ridiculous for the twentieth century and a slur on the British raj too serious for him to suffer.

Apparently everything had been tried by Government to bring these Criminal Tribes abreast of modern times. They had been provided with land and cattle, they had been so harried by the police that they should have been as weary of a wandering existence as Poor Jo, and their crimes had been punished with an unmistakable severity. In spite of all this, as their ancestors had defied the influence of Hindu and Muhamadan, so these, their degenerate and scarcely human descendants, defied the British influence. They would not work, they would not keep the peace, and they would not refrain from picking and stealing. Over the length and breadth of the United Provinces they roved in beggarly

hordes, and wherever they went an army of police had to follow them. Not only was it unthinkable that these savages should be allowed to flout the raj, but it was a very serious matter of expense for the Government to keep an eye upon them.

It chanced on one occasion, when Sir John Hewett was in England on furlough, that he heard of the Salvation Army's work of reclamation and regeneration among the broken earthenware of Europe. It struck him at once that similar methods might possibly be successful with the Criminal Tribes of India. Straightway, then, he paid a visit to General Booth, and these two men, so dissimilar in a hundred ways, met on the common ground of redemption and discussed the soul of man. General Booth, as most men know, is an old patriarch, thin and bowed, with a face of ivory, dim eyes, hair and beard the colour of snow—a face that age, goodness, and unselfish labour have combined to soften and make beautiful. Sir John Hewett, a very tall and burly figure, is in the full strength and power of middle-age, a man who carries himself like a soldier, has in his eyes the soldier's hard and penetrating scrutiny, and in his mouth the soldier's set and resolute determination; neither his life nor his temperament have softened the hard and vigorous lines of his countenance; he is a man, one would say, committed to business, conscious of power, used to obedience, and the sworn foe of sentimentalism.

But the old patriarch, with his dim eyes and rasping voice, brought home to the mind of the statesman one of the great fundamental truths of human experience, which too often legislators neglect, and the enemies of religion conveniently ignore. That truth may be expressed in a favourite epigram with Mr. Bramwell Booth, 'You cannot

make a man clean by washing his shirt.' If you have a bad man to deal with, you must seek to alter the set and current of his soul; if you have tribes and nations of evil-doers to govern, you must give them religion. To alter the circumstances of a man's life, to set him in conditions where his liability to vice is small and where the commission of sin will be most surely punished; to deal, in short, only with the body of a man when it is his soul that is the cause of trouble—this is to fall upon most certain failure. Only one power is known in all the long experience of human history by which a bad man may become a good man—really and truly a good man; and this power is religion.

Sir John Hewett came to terms with General Booth. The Government agreed to provide territory, and the Salvation Army undertook to provide men; the Criminal Tribes were to be brought into this territory, and the Salvationists were to be responsible for their regeneration.

Now, in former times the Government had provided land for some of these Criminal Tribes, and the experiment had proved a dismal failure. What was the new factor in the present arrangement? A simple and a most human thing, and yet the most miracle-working power on earth—Christian Kindness. The great statesman, the resolute man of affairs, yielded to the argument of General Booth—love and kindness can do more for wicked men than an army of policemen.

Before I tell the reader what I saw of this quite amazing work among the Criminal Tribes of the United Provinces, I should like him to realize the courageousness as well as the statesmanship of Sir John Hewett's action. No sooner was it known what he was about, than a perfect outcry was raised

among the Brahmans against Governmental proselytizing of the Natives. They had never lifted a finger to help one of these unfortunate wretches; on the contrary, they had held them off at arm's length as Untouchables and had themselves by an unparalleled ostracism and a most deliberate cruelty been responsible for nine-tenths of their crimes and miseries; but now, directly that it seemed Christianity was to save these people, the Hindus became their loving and devoted champions, and would save them from the wicked missionaries of the British Government. In all history can you think of a more unspeakable hypocrisy? These precious Brahmans, whom we are sometimes asked to regard as the keepers of a pure religion or as noble patriots brutally trodden into the dust of their own native land by the alien heel of British tyranny, were not ashamed, are not at the present day ashamed, to raise their voices and to excite public indignation, on the score of religion, against this little loving act of kindness towards the men and women whom they themselves had made pariahs and outcasts.

But their clamour could not shake the resolution of Sir John Hewett. He stood firm against all the fury that professional agitators sought to flog out of the indifference of Hindu Democracy. He had made it no stipulation with General Booth that the Salvationists should not proselytize; it was enough for him that General Booth had accepted the task of reclaiming and regenerating the Criminal Tribes, and he was well aware that this act of Christian Charity was not undertaken for the purpose of inflating the figures of Salvationist conversions. His arrangement had been made, and by that arrangement Sir John Hewett announced his unalterable determination to abide.

Quite recently the political societies in India have taken an interest in the Depressed Classes, one of the great fruits of Christianity in India; and as I showed in a former chapter, they are seeking to save these Depressed Classes from the Christian missionaries in order to establish Brahmanism on a surer and a broader foundation. Therefore the Government of the United Provinces has been severely criticized for its grants of land and money to the Salvation Army, and only the other day a debate took place in the Lieutenant-Governor's council in which a grant of 2,400 rupees for the Sansia Colony was opposed by the Hindus. On this occasion the answer of Mr. Burn, the very able Minister of Finance, was not only a perfect justification of Sir John Hewett's policy, but was so admirable a statement of the whole question of these Criminal Tribes that I shall take leave to quote it in full. He said:—

'The history of the attempts made by Government to reform and reclaim criminal tribes in these provinces is not an encouraging one. They began many years ago and many different methods have been tried. The tribes have been subjected to every variety of discipline from the slightest to the most severe. Attempts have been made to settle them on the land. When fields were allotted to them, they complained that they had no cattle. When cattle were given to them, they sold them. They asked for seed, and when seed was given to them, they ate it instead of sowing it. Some years ago when a settlement of Doms was in my charge the only method which could be evolved of seeing that the land was sown was to pay outsiders to sow the land for them and have the operation performed under the direct supervision of an official. There is one

difficulty in connection with any official attempt to deal with these people on which special stress must be laid. Recently there has been much discussion in the public press as to what are called the depressed classes. The criminal tribes which we are discussing belong to these classes. Personally, I am strongly of opinion that all of them would describe themselves as Hindus and that all Hindus would so regard them, but I would ask members to pursue this a little farther and realize what their holding to the Hindu religion means. Socially they are beyond the pale. They may not enter a Hindu temple. No member of a respectable caste will go near them if he can help it. If one of them touches a member of a high caste the latter is defiled. I make these remarks in no carping spirit, but simply with a desire to put the plain facts before the Council. Some of these people practise habits which are repellant to everybody. If their demands are rejected, or if they are crossed in any way, they have recourse to actions of unspeakable filthiness. It is obvious, having regard to the strict ideas of the orthodox and high-class Indian community, that any dealings with such people are attended with difficulty, and when the relation between the criminal tribes and Indian officials is one of subordination on the one side and strict discipline on the other, the difficulties are immensely enhanced. I can say without hesitation that Government is not satisfied with the success of the work of reclamation through official means in the past. This being so, the Council is invited to consider what better promise is held out by taking advantage of the offer of the Salvation Army to assist. It is obviously desirable, and indeed necessary, not only that every one engaged in the reform of such persons should be competent and honest,

but also that they should put their hearts into their work and should possess an unlimited fund of enthusiasm. I have given reasons why such enthusiasm is not to be expected from Indian officials, and I repeat that in doing so I have no desire to criticize the tenets of Hinduism which make it impossible that this should be the case. The Salvation Army, on the other hand, works through officers who are not only capable of enforcing such discipline as is required, but are fully equipped with the necessary enthusiasm. They live among the people and enter into their lives in a manner in which no official can be expected to do. Their influence is personal and humanizing. They study and learn to know every inmate of the settlement and enter into the lives of their charges with a tact and zeal that are already producing admirable results. Their officers are usually married and both husband and wife work together. These are briefly the *a priori* reasons why the help of the Salvation Army has been gladly enlisted by Government. Three settlements have been placed in charge of the Army. (*a*) A Dom settlement at Gorakhpur, (*b*) an Habura settlement at Moradabad, and (*c*) a Bhatu settlement at the same place. Most of the inmates of these settlements are employed in non-agricultural industries in the hope that they may be brought to practise a suitable livelihood and may give up their hereditary calling as thieves. These industries include weaving, carpentry, bag-making, rug-making, rope-making, the keeping of poultry and goats, and the rearing of silkworms. Women are taught sewing, thread-work and lace-work. For children an industrial school has been opened to which parents or guardians voluntarily send their children from all districts. Night schools for adults have also been established with

fair success. Melas, meetings, feasts and magic lantern services are held at the settlement. The inmates are thus made to feel that the settlement is not a penal institution or a system of compulsory detention, though discipline is by no means overlooked, and, when necessary, is enforced. In the last resort a man who proves intractable in spite of all efforts is sent away. From an economical point of view the experiment is likely to cost much less than any of its predecessors. A married European officer receives with his wife fifty rupees a month. No Indian of anything like the same capability would be content with such a stipend. The explanation why persons of some ability are ready to work as they do for so little is found in the fact that their wants are few and their zeal is great. The system of central management is thorough. Government is not asked to contribute even the full expense of the upkeep of the settlements. After a term of years the Salvation Army hopes that many of them will be self-supporting. Some time must elapse before the success of this institution can be really judged, but prospects are excellent.

'I have attempted to show that the experiment is hopeful in every way. The Honourable Member who proposed this resolution has asked, that in making grants to the Salvation Army, Government will insist that no attempts are made to convert these people. If such a condition were imposed the Salvation Army would almost certainly withdraw from the work. Up to the present there have been few conversions. It is possible that in future more of the inmates will be drawn to join the religion of those who have shown themselves to be their benefactors. This result can hardly be regarded as affording any genuine cause for complaint on the part of

the Hindu community. I have twice stated that the enlightened classes of Hindus appear unable owing to their religion to come into close personal contact with these people. But if other religious organizations, whether Hindu, Muhamadan, or Christian, choose to come forward to make similar efforts, if they can show as good credentials as the Salvation Army has shown, and that they are ready to co-operate as the Salvation Army has co-operated, I do not think there would be any reluctance on the part of the Government to afford them such assistance as has been given to the Salvation Army. Last of all, the members of the tribes themselves are entitled to some voice in the matter. I have recently seen a letter describing the latest development and will conclude my remarks by reading an extract from it. The letter says: "A party of Bhatus are marching towards Moradabad from Farrukhabad to apply for admission into our settlement. There are a lot of men in the party who are hiding in the jungles to keep away from the police." The simple brevity of this account is sufficient. I ask the Council to oppose the resolution on the ground that it would destroy at its inception the most promising experiment which has yet been tried, an experiment which has as its aim the elevation of an unfortunate class which will otherwise remain sunk in degradation and a nuisance to its neighbours.'

From this official utterance the reader will perceive that the Government's difficulty in dealing with the Criminal Tribes is a great one, that it is complicated in recent times by the jealousy of Hindu politicians working for the reform of Brahmanism, and that religion is recognized by the greatest statesmen in India as a supreme force in the regeneration of humanity. The reference of Mr. Burn to the

'necessary enthusiasm' of Salvationists seems to me an utterance significant enough to attract the attention of politicians in Europe and to arouse the zeal of Christendom.

Certainly what I saw of Salvation Army work among the primitive peoples of India vastly increased my respect for that extraordinary organization, which, all over the world, is doing spade work for civilization with results that are among the first evidences of Christian truth. I shall now give the reader some idea of this work in the United Provinces, beginning with a numerous and interesting tribe known as the Doms—a name which is pronounced like our word *domes*.

I made acquaintance with these people at Gorakhpur, one of the cleanest and pleasantest towns in all India. The settlement is just beyond the native quarter, and in charge of it, alone with all these dangerous criminals, is a Scotsman and his wife. The first sight that struck me on passing through the gateway and entering the dusty square surrounded by mud houses, was a pretty and fair-haired British child standing in the midst of half-naked and wild-looking natives—the child of the Salvationists. The full romance of this spectacle did not come home to my mind until I had studied the Doms and penetrated into the savage darkness of their minds.

The men are a tall and muscular race but without the smallest suggestion of enthusiasm, virility, or intelligent consciousness in their heavy and animal faces. The women, on the other hand, struck me as handsome if fierce and tigerish creatures—tall and vigorous women who held their heads splendidly, walked like goddesses, and flashed great eyes of confident self-approval at any stranger who presumed

to gaze at them. To look from the men to the women was like looking from one race to another, from one epoch to another epoch, almost from barbarism to civilization. In no race of men I have ever encountered was the feeling stronger with me of a soullessness and absence of mentality which seem sometimes to separate uncivilized people from the human species. One felt that these people were mankind in the making, the dough of humanity, not the bread, something out of which the race of man might ultimately be produced; one did not feel that they were ignorant, weak, fallen, or degenerate; the central conviction was that they represented some transitional species between the absolute animal and the incipient man.

There are many hordes of this gypsy-like tribe in the United Provinces. They are thieves by tradition and by nature, and the vigilance of police and the rigour of prison have combined to make them feel that life is a misery. Until Government entrusted them to the Salvation Army, I do not suppose a more wretched and unhappy people were to be found on the earth's surface. For while stealing seemed to them the only occupation of life and the only means of living, law and order stood in their path, dogged their footsteps, and laid them by the heels on every occasion that they followed their natural instincts. They tell stories to each other of their ancestors. According to their tradition there was at one time a Dom rajah. In those days they were rich. They built fine houses and laid out magnificent gardens. They fought for their wives —Homeric wars. When a man stole another man's wife, the relations of the defrauded man would rise up and go in pursuit of that wicked man. Life was good then—a ceaseless battle.

But these stories only come on the rarest occasions. The general talk is of thieving and crime. The Doms have become a tribe of petty thieves, stealers of dirty towels and goats and fowls, and their conversation has descended to the pettiness of their thefts. Talk of this nature is occasionally diverted by ghost stories.

They have a conception of some life after death, but cannot say what that life is like and show very little curiosity concerning it. They believe that there will be a place for the Doms in the next world. When a man dies they place drink and curry in the mouth, lay a pipe in the grave, and say to the corpse, 'When you wake up in the next world be sure and go to the Dom Khana, where you will get plenty of gambling.' They do not trouble about this next world; they do not care what becomes of them or where they go; and they think that exactly the same fate—whatever it may be—awaits both good and bad.

They have an absolute faith in the devil, but do not place him outside of the world. They believe that the earth belongs to him, or at any rate that he is the chief power on the earth, and to him they attribute every ill and every misfortune, and even death itself. They are afraid of the devil in this life, terribly afraid, but they laugh at the idea that there is any devil in the next world. They tell one with emphasis, 'The devil lives in this world.' Like the Hindus they number amongst them men who profess to cast out devils.

Once upon a time the Government gave these people land, ploughs, and cattle. The Doms killed the cows, ate them, and sold the hides. The land was taken away from them for this dishonourable conduct. And now they feel that a great act of

injustice has been perpetrated against them. They claim that the land is still theirs. Certain Doms, in fact, live on this land. Of all the subjects in the world the one they are most eloquent about is this 'robbery' of their land—they will talk to you about it with flowing words, faces of indignation, and gestures of a most righteous anger. 'The land was given to us,' they say; 'how can it belong to other people?'

I noticed that while the young men and lads were as dough-like and loutish as the grown men, the younger children showed evidences of brightness and intelligence. The handsome and tigerish women get their fine looks from the sway they exercise over the men; women do not steal, but they tell men to steal; no man, they say, is worth marrying who has not stolen so much jewellery; they are the spokesmen for the men and can face a Government inspector or an official of the police with an almost insolent self-assurance. But the brightness and intelligence of the children come from another source. They are the first-fruits of education, kindness, and the influence of Christianity. The response they make to the treatment of the lonely Scotsman and his wife is remarkable. They seize at once the notion of morality, the difference between right and wrong, the idea that goodness is something better and wiser and fitter than sin and crime. Not only this, they exhibit undoubted intelligence, and become skilled weavers and makers of carpets. One touch of kindness—how romantic to think it came from Scotland!—has transformed these young barbarians, marked for misery and evil, into quick-witted, moral and happy human beings.

But it is heartbreaking work for the lonely Scotsman and his wife to make the adult Dom

conscious of a good God and a revealing Christ. Here and there they see the light break into the darkness of a soul, but for the most part to attempt to teach religion to these people is like trying to teach a dog to sing or a parrot to paint.

Among their converts is a very interesting man, so superior in appearance to the other Doms that I could not at first think he belonged to them; a man between thirty and forty, with regular and handsome features, intelligent eyes, a firm mouth, and hair so carefully parted and brushed and moustache so dandified that but for his black skin he might have passed for a European man of fashion.

His name is Chitra, and he was born in a Dom village. He roamed with his parents in the jungle till the Government drove them into a Khana. He remembers little of the jungle life, but his parents told him about it, and talk in the Khana was chiefly about the crimes committed during that wandering life. Religion of any kind was never mentioned. He had absolutely no idea of a God. His ideas of right and wrong were made for him by Government. To steal was wrong because it meant the jail. Apparently there is no code of morality among the Doms. A husband may share his wife, if the wife agree; trouble never arises unless the husband objects, and then there is always a fight. One thing alone among them is counted indubitably wrong, and that is the violation of a child. After thirteen or fourteen a girl is free to the world, but before that age she is sancrosanct. To lie, far from being wrong, is a high attainment. Nothing is counted greater among them than the ability to deceive. Drunkenness is highly enjoyed, and is not considered wrong; they rejoice that for a couple of pice a man can buy enough arrack to make him supremely

and deliciously drunk. It is the finest thing in the world to them, this escape from the burden of consciousness and the ennui of their wretched existence. They are extremely taciturn among themselves, and will seldom declare how they came by money, jewellery, or any other property cunningly acquired from the common enemy. A man will suddenly give evidences of prosperity. His greatest friend will say admiringly, 'You are very rich.' The other will bow his acknowledgments. After a pause the friend will ask, 'How did it come?'—and the answer will be 'Who knows?' Again a pause, and then the questioner will inquire confidentially, 'Was it stolen?' And with a blank countenance the lucky man will reply, 'Who knows?'

Chitra told me the story of his conversion. 'When I came into the Salvation Army Settlement I learned to work and I listened to what was said to me. I got to know that God had made me. It must have been the Spirit of God that revealed this knowledge to me. It came suddenly. It did not seem strange. At once it seemed true. My spirit answered as if it knew. I remember that when I was asked, "Where is God?"—I replied, "In every place." And when I was asked, "Where is God as far as you are concerned?"—that I answered, "In my heart." And I used to pray, "Open my heart's door." I became conscious in my heart of God telling me what was right and what was wrong; I am still conscious of God in my heart; He is always telling me what is right and what is wrong.'

I asked him, 'Can you remember what were your first feelings when you heard that there was a good God?' 'My first feeling,' he replied, 'was fear. I was afraid because of the wrong in me.' 'Had you been afraid because of the wrong in you, before

you heard of a God?' 'No, it did not trouble me. When I felt that there truly was a God, then I was afraid. But I was not afraid for long. After my fear, then came gladness. I began to feel happy. Little by little, for a year and a half, I was learning about God. Then the truth came to me, and I was no longer afraid at all.'

Soon after he had settled down to a useful life, the desire to have a child became very great with him. He had been married for some time, but no children had come to cheer his home. With a Dom, as with every Hindu, the desire for a child is so great as to be a passion. Chitra, fresh from savagery, could not control this instinct. He looked about in the Settlement, saw a woman whose husband was in jail, and took her into his home. The Salvationist, discovering this state of things, turned Chitra and the second wife out of the Settlement. In two months he returned and begged to be taken back. His repentance was sincere. The husband of the second wife was out of jail and ready to take his wife and to forgive her for this union with Chitra. As for Chitra's wife, she wanted nothing better in the world than to have her husband restored to her. So the matter ended, and both couples are now thoroughly happy and the best of friends. But Chitra's wife came at Christmas-time to the wife of the Salvationist, and asked if she might have a doll for her present. Whether this request was made out of the hunger and pathos of her motherless heart, or whether it is a relic of that ancient homœopathic magic common among almost every primitive people, I do not know; but it was rather a tragic sight to see the pretty wife of Chitra with the doll in her lap, and Chitra looking on, and trying to make it seem a matter of no consequence.

Chitra has been three times in prison. His first sentence was a year for burglary, and at the time the burglary was committed he was asleep in his own house. His second sentence was a year for stealing, and again he was innocent. The third sentence was one of two years, and this time he was really guilty—he had run away from the village to escape the persecution of the police. He told me that he never worked; that he used to get his food by begging. The Doms, he said, are very clever at whining money and food out of other people; but they boldly intimidate and threaten the farmers who are now in possession of *their* land—the land once given to them by Government.

I asked him what was the general feeling among the Doms concerning themselves and their position among other peoples. 'The Doms are proud of themselves, because they know that other people fear them. They like to think that they can frighten a man by looking in at his door or following him into the fields. But they are now tired of a life which is never safe from the police, and they are coming to the Salvation Army in considerable numbers, begging to be taken into the Settlement and taught a trade, or at any rate protected from police interference.'

I inquired if they readily understood the religion of Christianity as he explained it to them. 'It is most difficult,' he answered, 'to make them understand anything about religion. They understand the morality of Christianity, but not the religion. When you say to them, It is wrong to do this or it is sinful to do that; they will nod their heads, and they will tell you, "That is good teaching." But when you speak about a good God in heaven, about love for this God, about longing to see Him, and about the promise of Jesus—no! they do not under-

stand; it puzzles them; they shake their heads and say, "We do not know." To show you how difficult it is; they could not understand prayer when they first came into the Settlement! New people who come in now, laugh when they see us praying. They do not know what prayer is, and when we try to explain, they laugh; they think it foolish. But the word has become a part of their new language. When we hold a meeting, no matter what it is about, they say to each other, "Come to Prayer." Some of them are more intelligent than others. Some are completely changed by religion. But most of them are too ignorant, or too tired, or too miserable to care anything about it. They are not even curious. It is very seldom that they talk about religion amongst themselves. Hardly ever do they ask me a question. And my difficulty is, that while I can explain to them the feelings of my own heart, I can never say whether they understand. They never tell you, "We do not understand," and they never ask, "Will you explain this or that?"—they only say, "We do not know." But it is certain that they are happy here. Doms come from all parts, begging us to find room for them; and they understand the morality of Christianity directly we begin to teach them. The next generation will be civilized, and Christians.'

It is worth noticing that in the case of these Doms the appeal has first to be made to the reason, not to the heart. Their reason responds to moral teaching; but their hearts remain obstinately closed to emotion and love. Among civilized people, religion appeals first to the heart, and, as Coleridge so well pointed out, the intelligence is developed and enlarged afterwards, by the healthful action of this cleansed heart.

Another Dom spoke to me about prison life. What he narrated is probably true, but the Government, of course, have no hand in the shameful part of it. It is the Indian who is hard on the Indian. Let the English chief turn his back, and Native afflicts Native, and the Jack-in-office becomes a tyrant. I could give many instances of this unfortunate state of things. 'In jail,' said this Dom, 'they give us little food and much water. They do nothing to teach us or touch our hearts. The warders are very brutal. They carry a stick like a roller, and they hit us with it. They say to us, "If you don't make your relations give us money, we will beat you." Doms come to us and beg for money to give to these warders, so that their sons or their fathers or their brothers may not be beaten. One warder would put men in water up to the neck for an hour. First he would beat them, then put them in the water; then take them out, beat them, and put them back in the water; and a third time. Beat—water; beat—water; beat—water; three times. Other warders hit men with their fists. When a Dom comes out of prison he is often dazed and numb; many die soon after. One warder watches at night to prevent talking, fighting, smoking, and gambling. No talking is allowed night or day. I was in prison for two years, all except two months; it was terrible. I came to the services in the Settlement because I wanted to give up thieving and lying, to do work, to earn my living, and to remain in the peace and happiness of the Settlement. I can now earn nine and a half rupees a month. I say to the others, "Better for you to be like me. I do not steal. I am not sent to jail. I pray to God. I earn money. I am happy." They see that I am happy. I always say to them, "See how happy I am. Is

it not a fine thing to be happy?" And they say, "It is true; we want to be good." Oh, a great change is taking place among the Doms. The old race will die out, and a new one will be born. All the children will soon be Christians. There will be no more crime, and no more jail.'

The splendid little Scotsman in charge of this Settlement agrees that a great change is taking place, although he makes the frank acknowledgment that no one could say the Doms are Christians. 'When we first started,' he said, 'I used to be wakened from sleep in the middle of the night by a noise like pandemonium, and I had to go down and separate the men, who were fighting like wild beasts. It really was hardly safe in those days. But we stuck to it, and prayer and kindness have succeeded so far as to put a stop to all fierceness and fighting. They realize now that the Mukti-Fauj is here to help them; that we are not agents of the police, but Christians trying to be kind and helpful. I do not think we should be criticized for our slowness to convert. One must recognize that our task is first to make the Doms human, and then Christians. They are demoralized at present by their own habits and by the brutality of the police. There are only some four European officers to all the police looking after these three million Doms; it is impossible to prevent tyranny and injustice. But there has been a vast improvement among the police in recent years. Sir John Hewett has handled this matter finely. He has not relaxed the severity which is really necessary in dealing with large bodies of nomadic and marauding tribes, but he has taken steps to prevent that severity from becoming the weapon of the blackmailer. The Government, indeed, has been splendid in this matter. One of them came to see

our Industrial Exhibition, and he said publicly that by going for the inside of the Doms instead of the outside, the Salvation Army had done more in two years than the Government, with all the forces of law and order at its disposal, had been able to do in twenty-five years.'

He told me that in the worst of these Doms there is always something to which appeal may be made. One of these police-hunted wretches, he said, went away to Jamaica and there made money, learned English, secured a good position, and was free of all fear; but he came back to the Dom country and was almost immediately seized by the police and thrown into jail. 'Why did you come back?' asked the Scot. 'Dis heart,' he answered, placing his hand on his breast and bursting into tears, 'long to see poor old mother.'

I paid a visit to the jail on a certain Sunday morning, as I wanted to see the religious service which the Salvation Army is now permitted to hold in the prison for the benefit of Dom prisoners. We drove out from Gorakhpur in a carriage, and passed through charming country rendered more delightful by the brightness of the sun, the freshness of the air, and the scents of Spring which came to us on the cooling wind. The jail is approached by a long avenue of alternate tamarind and teak trees, the pale red walls, tiled roofs, and gate of entry with its armed sentinel, blocking out the tender blue of distance with a sinister abruptness. But even the prison walls, the guarded gate, and the threatening bayonet of the sentry, could not rob the goodness from the air or cloud the joy of that perfect morning in Spring. I had no melancholy thoughts or feelings of depression as the gate opened and I passed into the shadow of this human cage.

Through the heavy gateway one passed into a paved court, from whose coolness and shadows one saw that the avenue of trees left outside the barred door, but this time formed only of tamarinds, was continued across a green and sunny space to the inner buildings of the prison. Under the two first tamarind trees on the left hand side of the central path crossing this space, and occupying in horseshoe formation a wide circle of broken pink brick between the path and the grass, was gathered the congregation of Dom prisoners. They were dressed for the most part in awkward thick hairy coats of dark grey edged with white, and wore from a steel ring circling their necks a block of wood stamped with the dates of their sentences and the Act under which they had been convicted. Two or three had steel gyves upon their ankles, but the majority wore only a single ring on one leg, to which the full fetters would be attached when there was any danger of escape. They were squatting on their haunches, the arms laid across the knees, the heads inclining wearily in every case towards one of the humped shoulders. Upon their shaven heads was a small round cap—foul, greasy, and worn at as many different angles as there were prisoners.

Before this horseshoe of wretched humanity, was a row of chairs on which we were invited by the Salvationists, two of them converted Doms, to take our seats. The sun shining through the soft leaves of the tamarinds chequered the pink ground with light and shade and sprinkled a dust of gold upon the unhappy captives; two or three warders in khaki and tall turbans of gloomy blue, their club-like truncheons under their arms, stood looking at the gathering in the full sunlight of the central path; gangs of prisoners passed every now and then on the

narrow paths slanting across the grass of the court; ten or eleven prisoners at a distance of some fifty yards sat upon their haunches and listened to the service; the Native doctor was busy weighing a section of his five hundred captives on the opposite side of the avenue; the *clink-clank* of prisoners toiling in the blacksmith's shop came to us from the distance; in the trees, on the roofs, and in the dust of the paths birds were quarrelling and chirping with all the energy of urgent controversy.

The service was extremely simple. The Salvationist of the Settlement, making his rich Scotch accent sound through his Hindustani, repeated sentence by sentence the words of a hymn and then beating time with his right hand led the singing. This singing was the work of the Salvationists. The crouching prisoners sang not a word and in their eyes was the dull listlessness of a dense stupor. A prayer followed, a prayer that God, Who is Father of all men, would make Himself manifest that day and bless with His presence and His mercy the service held in the prison. None of the prisoners bowed his head, closed his eyes, or covered his face. Afterwards the same Salvationist spoke of Christ and the revelation made by Him of God's way to the Kingdom of Heaven. The Doms did not shift their positions nor manifest the least interest. There was more singing, and then one of the converted Doms, dressed in the red jacket of the Salvation Army, bareheaded and holding in his hand a New Testament, stood before the prisoners. He told them to open their hearts to the Spirit of God. 'It is wrong,' he said, 'to steal; it is wrong to get drunk; it is wrong to gamble and fight. When you do these things, the police catch you, and you are locked up in prison. See how you suffer! Sin is always

punished. You cannot be happy while you do wrong. It is only by doing good that a man can be happy. Sin is punished on earth, and it is punished in hell. Heaven is only for those who are good and love God. If you want to go to heaven you must be good. If you want to have a happy home, with a wife and children, you must be good. I was like you till I gave my heart to God. I used to steal and drink. I was taken away from my home. I was locked up in prison. My heart was full of sin. But the Spirit of God taught me the way to happiness. I gave up sin. I learnt to work for my bread. And now I am happy. You must open your hearts to God. You must give up sin. You must come into the Salvation Army Settlement and learn to work for your living. Then you will be happy like me.'

Throughout this earnest and straightforward address I carefully studied the faces of the prisoners. Not in one of them could I discover the smallest beginning of response, the least trace of understanding. Like men half-stupefied by a drug, or worn to the point of sleep by some laborious exercise, they regarded the preacher out of closing eyes, and let their heads sink more and more towards the support of their shoulders. But for the languor in their faces they might have been carved out of ebony.

In almost every case the skull was small and narrow, the cheek-bones projected far beyond the temples, and the jowl was full-rounded. The mouths were firm but without energy, compressed in a bitter resignation and a settled lethargy. In the eyes, some of them handsome enough, I could see neither intelligence nor cunning; here and there one noticed the beginnings, but only the beginnings, of craft. It seemed to me that these big, black-faced, small-

skulled, and weary-eyed prisoners, belonged rather to some species of torpid animals than to the most wicked or the most stupid races of humanity.

A Native girl, rescued by the Salvation Army from a famine district, and trained throughout childhood in the methods of The Army, stood under the shade of the tamarinds and spoke in a most gracious and winning way to the crouching prisoners of God's love for men and His yearning to bestow peace and happiness upon all those who will seek His blessing. Her voice was exceedingly musical, she had the gentlest of kind eyes, her gestures were all tender and compelling—but there was no response from the prisoners—absolutely no response of any kind.

After another hymn, a vigorous address by the Salvationist, in which he told of the worst men in England changed in a second by conversion from misery to joy, and a closing prayer, I was invited to walk round the horseshoe of captives and ask them any questions I might like. For the first time I detected something of intelligence in these poor miserable men. They seemed to regard me as a Sahib of the Government with power to unlock their prison doors. Every one to whom I spoke seemed to rouse some drowning intelligence in his brain and professed his wish to enter the Settlement and live a law-abiding life—not with any enthusiasm, not with any repentance for the past, but with a tired effort to convince me that they were sick to death of their condition.

It came to me that perhaps in the silence of their hearts these children of savagery against whom the centuries have sinned so long and grievously, put the God of Christianity to a test, and pray for deliverance. Suppose that they do this? They are

told that He has only to be asked for mercy and that mercy will come to them. They are told that He is all-powerful and that there is nothing that He cannot do. Suppose they pray to Him. Suppose, with the dull cunning of animals, they put this new God to a test. 'Take me out of prison, place me in the Salvation Army, do not let me spend any more years in this cruel prison.' And then, when the Salvationists come to them on Sunday, and they say—'We want to be good; let us come into the Settlement and we will worship your God'—they must be told, 'there is six months more of your sentence still to run.' What a God!—a God Who cannot even deliver a man from an unjust sentence of imprisonment!—a God Who is said to be a worker of wonders, an almighty and great God Who must wait upon the police before He can act!

One often thinks when a clergyman reads in Church with dramatic energy the wonderful chapter in which Elijah challenged the priests of Baal to a conflict in magic, how hard it would fare with him if some atheist rose and challenged him to a conflict of the same kind.

The Doms are so simple and primitive as to be scarcely human. To make them realize the existence of a God is extraordinarily difficult; to make them grasp the idea of a God Who is at one and the same time perfect Love and unalterable Law, is, I should say, impossible. As I looked at them during this service I wondered what Pascal would say of them, or Bossuet, or Bishop Butler, or the latest popular preacher in New York. Are they, indeed, children of God and heirs of eternal life? Do they represent the race against which Satan directs the artillery of hell and for which the innocent Christ

offered up His life on the cross? Or are they vestiges of humanity's brute origin? Men who have never fallen, and men who have never risen; creatures who must be lifted by education and science into the kingdom of civilization before they can understand the alphabet of religion and take a first step into the Kingdom of God?

One thing to me is wholly certain. The prison system can help in no single way to make these miserable savages intelligent human beings. It is a monstrous system. Lock men up by all means, keep them in your power, and feed them with the same care that a wise man gives to his horse and his dog, but in the name of common sense do not shut them out from the influences of useful work, animal companions, healthy games, literature, art, science, and human kindness. I cannot think how men can be so stupid as to allow the present prison system to continue for another day, unless it is the effect of that fear and distrust of our fellow creatures which is the foundation of all conservatism and the solidest obstruction to all progress. No one, I am sure, could doubt for a moment after a visit to the Dom Settlement, where a single Scotsman and his wife perfectly control an army of barbarians, that if all the prisons of England and India, nay, of all the world, were given into the keeping of the Salvation Army the regeneration of the Criminal Classes would be accomplished in a few decades. It is not enough to supplant the military governor by the trained Doctor and the schoolmaster; something is needed which science does not possess and education cannot create to order—that wonderful enthusiasm for humanity, that unquestioning belief in human perfectability, that absolute faith in the love and mercy of God, which are only to be found

among those to whom religion is a personal experience. Crude to us the method of the Salvation Army may appear; it may grate upon our senses and strike jangling discords across the stately music of our spiritual life; but this Army has the secret of saving men. It has 'an unlimited fund of enthusiasm,' and its 'influence is personal and humanizing.' No finer testimonial was ever given to the Salvation Army than the statement of Mr. Burn in India: 'They live among the people and enter into their lives.'

I have seen this work and I bear witness to it.

THE BHATUS AND A BRIGADIER

'KIND words,' says Faber, in a charming phrase, 'are the music of the world; they have a power which seems to be beyond natural causes.' It is the mystery of kind words that they do not need, like the delicate seeds of a rare plant, to have the ground prepared for them; they break into flower even as they fall, and whatever may be the nature of the soil. A nocturne by Chopin, a landscape by Claude, a sonnet by Shakespeare—these things demand even among the civilized and refined something beautiful in the soul before their appeal can become irresistible; but a kind word may arrest a brutal nature in the very commission of a crime or literally create a new spirit in the mind of a savage. It is astonishing that this power of kindness has not been put to greater use among the law-makers of humanity in their hard task of elevating those great masses of men dragging everywhere like a dead weight on the skirts of progress. Philanthropy is not a hobby of the sentimental, it is a power of unparalleled force in the mechanism of evolution. One has only to consider the extraordinary results of a few years' experience among the Criminal Tribes of India by a religious organization which relies on kindness and kindness alone for its redemptive work, to realize how victorious is this energy of the soul, and of

what vast service it might be to the general progress of mankind.

For these Criminal Tribes are not only willing to enter the settlements of the Salvation Army, they are everywhere clamouring to be admitted. I cannot easily forget the pathetic appeal made to me by a Bhatu of Moradabad—an appeal made by the eyes and the hands—as he knelt before me, beseeching that I should get him admitted to the crowded and over-crowded Settlement of his tribe. And soon after I had left Moradabad, I heard from the admirable Brigadier in charge of the work, an Indian, that an army of several hundreds of these people were then on the march to the Settlement, the wives carrying babies, the husbands carrying young children, and the older children carrying the family possessions—marching by night, and hiding in the jungle by day, for fear that the police might intercept them and drive them back. It is a pitiful thing, a terribly pitiful thing, that these harried and much enduring people, who go down on their knees imploring the Salvation Army to take them, should have to be repulsed simply for want of a little money. The Government has done all it can do, in giving land and buildings and making grants; but much more money will be needed—and one hopes that the rich men of India as well as the rich people in England and America may realize it—before all these millions of useless, profitless, and suffering humanity can be brought within the pale of civilization and made a blessing to humanity.

While the man of whom I have spoken knelt before me, a much pleasanter-looking Bhatu, indeed a rather noble specimen of mankind, sat on one of the stairs descending from the veranda of the Settlement's headquarters—once a palace—and told me

about his people and himself. It was an afternoon of insufferable heat; an old fellow stood behind my chair beating the flies away from me with a cloth, and in my hands I held a tumbler of constantly replenished lemon water. Before me were the two Bhatus; three steps lower down sat an old and withered woman, an elbow resting on her knee, her face lying in the cup of her hand, her eyes watching me, her lips mumbling a monotonous soliloquy. Beyond us, at the bottom of the high veranda on which we sat, stretched the dusty compound, shimmering in the blinding sunlight and patched by the pale shadows of listless trees. And from every point in that compound came the cackle of fowls, for the Brigadier's wife is an expert in poultry, and from behind us in the cool shades of the large house came the rattle of the looms, where the Bhatus were at work as weavers.

The handsome Bhatu said to me, 'Our people were a race of soldiers. We served a mighty Rajah, who gave us many lands, and we were rich. Once we refused to fight for him; our lands were taken from us and we became a wandering people. That is a long time ago. Since then our people have been dacoits and outcasts. There has been no place where we could rest. Our sufferings have been very great. The police used to make our women do what they asked; if we resisted they placed brass pots in our camps and we were arrested for stealing. You must do what the police tell you, right or wrong, or you go to jail. It is not safe for a Bhatu outside the Settlement.'

I asked him about the religion of the Bhatus. 'We know there is a God, but we do not know anything about Him. We do not know what He wants. Our bhagats (fakirs, or holy men) know

something about the devils. After death we live in another world, but we do not know what it is like. We do not think much about these things. Mostly we talk about stealing and fighting and the police.'

'Do you worship your ancestors?' I asked.

'No!' he answered emphatically. 'We are very angry with our ancestors. All our troubles have come from them. If they had fought for the great Rajah we should not have suffered. And for many years all our ancestors have been dacoits. There are boys of twelve among our people who are first-rate dacoits. They can attack a man in the dark and rob him. They can take jewels from women. They learn from their fathers, and they are not afraid. We think our fathers have led us into wrong. We know that dacoiting is wrong because we get sent to jail.'

The Brigadier in charge of this work, who acted as interpreter, said to me: 'The Bhatus have a very bad name, especially the women. The women are dancers, beggars, and prostitutes. The men are fearless and very cunning. A police superintendent told me that with five Bhatus he would storm any village in India. They are audacious, strong, and extraordinarily ferocious. They fight with two long sticks in their hands. They approach an adversary carrying both these sticks, and from either hand fling one at his face with frightful force, and then spring upon him with the other. While the women dance or beg, the men go into the jungle and hunt for pig and deer. They are a bold people, rather a proud people; but they are perfectly amenable to discipline when they are sure of kindly treatment.'

The Bhatu told me about marriage customs. He said that the women are more numerous among Bhatus than the men, the opposite condition of

things to that which obtains among the Haburas, a tribe presently to be considered. They are very strict about their marriage ceremony, even when the bride is a professional woman. Everything must be done with much pomp and in due order. No one can be married without a feast. Parents demand as much as four hundred rupees for a daughter, but the money is generally spent in a ceremonial debauch of which the bridegroom and his relations are careful to obtain an adequate share. They drink country arrack at these festivals, but it is only at weddings that they give way to drink with intemperance. To get a young girl for his wife is the chief desire of a Bhatu, and when he has saved enough money for this purpose his chief occupation is to guard his possession from the police.

The reader may remember that I quoted Sir Bamfylde Fuller as saying that certain thieves in India can steal the bedclothes from a sleeper. As the Bhatus are expert and most daring burglars, and as I had established a complete confidence with my friend on the veranda, I asked him through the interpreter to tell us how these burglaries are committed—to tell us the secret of these extraordinary visitations. While he was speaking, after a consultation with the poor fellow clamouring to be admitted to the Settlement, the old woman flashed angry eyes at him and muttered in far louder tones her mysterious and never interrupted soliloquy.

He told me that the burglars go to a burying ground where a dead virgin has lately been given to the flames, and carefully collect a portion of her ashes, these ashes they take to their bhagat, or magician, who performs certain ceremonies over them, and returns them to the burglars. The ashes are now ready for use. 'We go to a house,' said

the Bhatu, 'enter it very carefully, and sprinkle these ashes on the faces of the sleepers. We have to be very careful not to make the slightest noise in entering the house, but as soon as we have sprinkled the ashes we may make just as much noise as we like; the sleepers will not wake till the spell is worn off in the morning.'

He was perfectly natural in this narration, and it was evident from the anger and annoyance in the eyes of the withered old woman on the steps below him, that he was telling me a genuine secret of his people; but it seemed so incredible that the ashes of a virgin could act in this magical fashion and I was so sure of being imposed upon, that I turned to the Native Salvationist with a smile and asked him what he thought of the tale.

To my surprise I found that the Salvationist was not smiling, on the contrary that he was grave and thoughtful. He answered my question in these words, 'I have never heard this account before; it seems to me impossible to be true, but it makes me think, because in two or three recent burglaries the police have found a greenish-grey ash scattered about the house, particularly round the beds where people have slept.'

Now, it is possible that the bhagat is not content with ceremonial rites when he handles the ashes, and that he either impregnates them with a powerful narcotic or that he substitutes for them altogether something of a soporific character: however that may be, it is interesting to bear in mind that both Dr. Frazer and Mr. Edgar Thurston give many instances in their books of the savage belief in the virtue of almost everything attaching to a virgin—from a drop of her blood to her ashes after death. And Mr. Thurston, who probably knows more about

the primitive peoples of Southern India than any man now living, tells me that in certain districts a pregnant woman is very often attacked and murdered for the sake of that which she carries, and that the buried bodies of little girls are constantly dug up because of the magical value attached to everything about them.

The Indian Brigadier in charge of the Bhatu Settlement is a man of culture whose mind is governed by liberal ideas. He is a man, too, of practical common sense, with unusual powers of organization : the last man in the world to attach any importance to the superstitions of uncivilized peoples. But he told me that there are many things in the practice of the Criminal Tribes which cannot be satisfactorily explained on natural grounds : and in telling me the story of his own life he referred to an incident which makes it certain for him that we are governed more than we yet realize by invisible forces.

He was born in Southern India—his father a high-caste Hindu who had been converted to Christianity by the American Mission, his mother a Tamil Christian. Soon after marriage the man became dissolute and intemperate in his habits. Two children were born of the marriage, and the poor woman, who appears to have been something of a saint, was greatly distressed by this degrading and ruinous change in her husband's character.

'When the days came,' said the Brigadier, 'that my father abandoned himself to drink, my mother used to pray for him, remaining for hours upon her knees. One night she had a dream. She dreamed that she was in the jungle with my sister, then a child in the arms. As she wandered through the jungle, very distressed and unhappy, like one who had lost her way, a gharry suddenly appeared before

her in the trees, shining with light, the horses as if fashioned from fire; and in the gharry was seated an old man with a beard of flowing white and garments that shone like the horses. She was afraid, and stood still, holding my sister to her breast. But the old man said to her, "Come near," and as he spoke she lost her sense of dread, and moved forward. Then the old man said to her, "Be at peace, and do not distress yourself; in three years and three months it will be well with you." Then he vanished from her sight. When she woke in the morning the impression of this dream was so vivid that it was as if she had truly been in the jungle and had actually seen the old man and heard him speak. She made a note of the dream and the prophecy, said nothing about the matter, and continued her daily life as before. My father became worse and worse; the prosperity of the home began to dwindle; my poor mother never knew a single hour of peace and hope; in fact, you could scarcely imagine a home more wretched and more threatened with ruin. This state of things continued for three years and three months, and then to the very day, my father disappeared. Without a word, without a hint, without a quarrel, without warning of any kind, he vanished. My mother went to the police, and to the mission: everything was done to discover whether he was alive or dead, but no information could be got of any kind. It was really as if the earth had opened and swallowed him up. From that day to this, nearly forty years, no news has been forthcoming as to what happened to him. I often discussed the matter with my mother and she was always perfectly clear that the day of his disappearance fulfilled the prophecy of her dream. Both she and myself were struck by the incongruousness of the gharry in this

dream, but my mother declared emphatically that it was a veritable gharry, and not a chariot or vehicle of a more striking kind. One cannot explain these things. They happen; we are surprised by them; and we go on.'

The disappearance of the father plunged the family into poverty. The mother dressed as a widow, gave up the use of flowers, and went as nurse to the minister and his wife in charge of the American Mission. This couple appear to have been very noble people. The Brigadier's eyes grew tender when he spoke about them. 'He was like a father to me, and she was a second mother. They loved us, my sister and myself, and they gave themselves to us as if we had been their own children.' The boy was clever and passed from the mission school to the higher education of a college course. I have not seen a Native of India with a finer shaped head, or more intelligent eyes; but for his dark skin he would pass for a typical French savant—a bright, rapid, and vivacious intelligence. While he was at college, the missionaries were obliged to return to America. He went to see them off from Madras, and so great was his grief at parting from them that he could not restrain his tears. While he stood there, vainly struggling to restrain his grief, he saw some Europeans dressed in Native clothes, two women and a man, who attracted his attention even in his grief; he saw them through his tears. After parting from his friends, he wandered wretchedly through the streets of Madras, like a dog bereft of his master. Darkness fell on the city, and still he could not bear to go back to college. As he entered a certain street he saw a hall into which people were passing as if for a meeting. He approached the door, looked in, and

saw the three Europeans in Native dress who had attracted his attention a few hours before. Struck by the coincidence, and curious to discover who they were, he entered the hall.

'I had no knowledge at that time,' he told me, 'of the Salvation Army, and this meeting made a very great impression on my mind. I was struck by the earnestness and sincerity of the Salvationists. I also felt a lack in myself of something which was essential to my peace of mind. For many weeks and months afterwards I was haunted by the picture of those three people on the platform, indeed it is an ineffaceable impression to this day. I was extremely wretched and unhappy. I missed my American missionaries with my whole heart, and I was fighting against sin. I was about eighteen years of age: and although I was pure, and had no impulse at all towards immorality, I was so quick-tempered and so ungoverned in my anger, that I felt in despair about myself. It is curious that I was of a very shy and retiring disposition; not a man, one would say, to fly in a passion and lose control of himself. But so it was. The least opposition or annoyance flung me into a rage, and in a rage I was capable of anything—violence and ferocity of a dreadful nature. I used to go into the hills and pray; I was very constant in my attendance at church. I wanted to feel that God was near me; that He was not afar off; that He was not half real, but actually real, and close at my heart to strengthen my better resolutions and guard me against anger.

'I must confess to you that I had inherited something of Hinduism in my nature. The Hindu religion teaches that a man must work out his own salvation, that escape from existence can only be won by the work of the man himself, it is he who

must do everything. Now, although I had faith in God, and although my object was the very opposite of the Hindu religion, I was yet trying to reach my goal by the same methods. Nothing that I had learned from the American Mission gave me any other conception of the Christian religion. I thought I could win God. Not till later in my life did the truth flash upon the darkness of my soul like a great light—the truth that consciousness of God and freedom from sin are not to be won by effort, or by formality of any kind—but by receptiveness of the heart.

'This truth came to me when I was staying with my sister, who had married a Native clergyman. I met at her house a Salvationist, a relation of her husband. The sight of the uniform revived in my mind the picture of the meeting in Madras, and I was conscious at once of a singular, I may really say a magnetic attraction in the man. So great indeed was the attraction of this Salvationist, he was a Hindu, that I told him all my troubles that very evening, and after he had comforted and encouraged me, we spent the whole night on our knees praying to God for illumination. It came at daybreak. Quite quietly and naturally, but with a sense of serenity for my heart that I cannot express to you, the light entered, and I saw that God loves a man in spite of his sins and in spite of his failures. It was this wonderful knowledge that God really had love for me, that His attitude towards me was that of a father, irrespective altogether of what I was, in spite altogether of my sins—it was this knowledge that entered into my troubled soul and into my exhausted heart, just like a Voice breathing the words of Christ, *Peace be still.* My relief was so great that I rose up and said, "He has given me

His love. I know now the only happiness, the only satisfaction.''

'Instead now of dwelling on myself, and striving to make my own way, I thought instantly of others, and longed to share with them the knowledge of God which had given such wonderful and beautiful peace to my own soul. But when I spoke to my sister and my brother-in-law about becoming a Salvationist they opposed the idea. My brother-in-law said to me, "This is only an emotion; it will wear off; you will be sorry if you take a step such as you contemplate in your natural excitement." The Salvation Army meant poverty, and in those days it also meant ostracism. The other missions disliked its methods, and Government officials felt greatly annoyed by the appearance of Europeans in our Indian costume. My mother implored me not to throw away my life. I was taken to village meetings, and my brother-in-law held out to me the prospect of becoming a respectable clergyman with a decent income and a comfortable house. I was influenced by these ideas, but I still wanted to be a Salvationist, because I felt there was no utter happiness and no complete satisfaction without a total surrender of the soul to a life of self-sacrifice. However, I let them arrange for me to enter a theological college, and started off one day to enter on my training for a clergyman. By some miscalculation I arrived a day too soon, and having nothing to do I journeyed to the town where my sister was living that I might spend the afternoon with her. There in her house I met the Salvationist who had so greatly influenced me and who had brought me to a true knowledge of God. It was a difficult moment for all of us. My sister and my mother had carefully kept us apart; I had never seen him nor heard from him since our first meeting; and

now, just as I was about to begin my training for the Church, we encountered. During the time I was at the house we were never left alone together, and I could see that my brother-in-law was determined to save me from the man's influence. But when he came to go for bullock-carts, it was discovered that only one could be found, and so in spite of all their precautions, I and the Salvationist were obliged to travel together. I am more grateful than I can tell you that there was only one bullock-cart to be had that night. For as we journeyed together, the man's magnetism overcame me, all my enthusiasm revived, and I felt as sure as I have felt of anything in my life, that God's Will with me was that I should become a Salvationist. Instead of going to the theological college, I went straight to Madras, and offered myself to the Army. Some weeks afterwards while I was at a meeting a message came that I was wanted outside, and going to the door I found a well-known missionary waiting to speak to me. He was one of the best missionaries in India, a man of extraordinary goodness, and one who had exercised a certain charm over my mind. He came, at the wish of my mother and my brother-in-law, to beg me to enter the theological college and to consecrate my life to the ministry of the American mission. We spoke together for fifteen minutes. How I answered him I do not remember now; it is all like a dream: but I know that he returned to my sister and my brother-in-law, and said to them, "You must let him be; he has been called by God." And since that day I have never known unhappiness or dissatisfaction. I have lived every hour. Wherever I have been sent I have found a sphere of usefulness, and now, in charge of this Settlement, I am happier than I have ever been—my one distress that

we have not more money to take more of these poor Bhatus into our care.'

The Settlement is one for which Fakir Singh has a particular affection, and the least imaginative man, I think, could not fail to be struck if he saw these Bhatus, these former murderers, burglars, and dacoits, working intelligently at the looms, peacefully cultivating the land, and learning with pleasure and delight to be dairy-men and poultry-keepers, under the spell of kindness and the magic of Christian love.

The Brigadier is not a man to exaggerate or to prophesy millennial bliss. He acknowledges that to make some of the older Bhatus understand Christianity is impossible. He does not anticipate that he will soon be in a position to flourish the announcement of wholesale conversions among the Bhatus in the delighted faces of a pious missionary-supporting public in America and England. But he is convinced, with no shadow of misgiving, that kindness can reclaim these people from crime and barbarism, that a few years will suffice to make the Settlement a self-supporting colony of manufacture and agriculture, and that education and the influence of Christianity will convert the whole of the next generation to moral ideas and the standards of civilization.

I visited the looms and purchased some of the products, which are now pronounced to be by an exacting housekeeper, of a very good quality. The men at the looms appeared to me a fine and handsome race, a race of beings no whit inferior to any of the peoples of India except some of the highest Brahmans, Parsis, and certain of the hill tribes. They have a manly and vigorous look, hold themselves well, and are not sleepy, dull and torpid with that inhuman inertness of the Doms. I imagine that

under the care of such a man as the Brigadier there will be no difficulty in bringing these intelligent, courageous, and energetic people into the first ranks of Indian humanity.

'I find,' he said, 'that they are anxious to learn weaving, and that they soon grasp the difficulties of that trade. Indeed, I should say that they were unusually quick at learning. But the older men, and the women long accustomed to a life of prostitution, are only anxious to enter the Settlement as a place of peace and security. I have no illusions on that head. Some show a keener and quicker intelligence than others, some respond to Christian ideas very easily, and many are by nature what one would call good men and virtuous women. In fact, they are a mixed body, representing many stages of human progress. But who can doubt that the worst as well as the best of them, should be delivered from their wretched and useless life and helped towards something which is at least consecrated by Christianity?'

I am glad to say that the people of Moradabad now take a kindly interest in the Settlement, and that the Brigadier finds he can dispose of almost all his products among the European community.

THE HABURAS AND A CHOKIDAH

A MILE or two from Moradabad is the Settlement, provided by the Government and managed by the Salvation Army, for a tribe known as the Haburas, to whom reference was made in the last chapter. These people are almost as fierce as the Bhatus and almost as animal as the Doms. They occupy a mid-way position between the beastlike races of man, and the races who have come by audacity and valour to the semblance of civilized humanity.

The Settlement lies some way from a road, and in crossing the land with my friend the Brigadier—whose name of Jivandham, Joy of Life, harmonized with the beautiful morning on which this visit was paid—I saw some of the Haburas at work in the fields. A group of men, cutting down a tall reed grass with instruments resembling our bill-hooks, attracted my notice, but I learned with surprise that they were not Haburas. 'We have to employ these men,' said the Brigadier; 'for the work of cutting this sharp and stubborn reed is beyond the skill and beyond the strength of the Haburas.' He told me that the hands of the Haburas are as soft and tender as children's from centuries of idleness, and that they become easily disheartened if given work which taxes their strength or skill. 'They are so backward,' he said, 'that they cannot even build their

own mud houses; we have to employ men to build and repair all our buildings. As for this reed, it is not a serious matter, we pay piece work, and the sale of the reed leaves us a profit.'

Presently we passed a genuine Haburah. He was a small old man, naked save for his loin cloth, and so wrinkled and shrivelled and pathetic that one could not look at him without compassion. He was seated on the ground, his little legs open, and with a scraping instrument, was scratching and dragging from the land between his feet, a small plant that suggested a straggling carnation root fresh from the nursery and very much scorched by the sun, and in most urgent need of moisture. This little dried up plant he placed in a bag at his side, and went on scraping at another. I learned that this is a plant of exceeding value in India, a plant holding the highest honour in the estimation of many a great Sahib and many a great Rajah—for it is the dūb grass (*cynodon dactylon*) which to the horse in India is what meadow hay is to the horse in England. 'We sell it in Moradabad,' said the Brigadier, 'and get a good price for it.'

The shrivelled old man on the ground had feet and hands as narrow as any girl twelve years of age. It was a curious contrast to look from these pretty extremities—the soles of the feet and palms of the hands as white as any European's—to the bald head, the furrowed brow, the dim and sunken eyes, the indrawn lips, and curving chin of his withered countenance. I was struck by the extreme dimness of his eyes, and spoke to the Brigadier about their condition. He addressed a question to the old man, and then, stooping forward, lifting a lid, and tilting up the head so that the sun struck full in the eye, he said, 'He is almost blind.'

We continued our walk across the land, and presently came in sight of what seemed to be a mud fort. I must explain that our carriage had been met in the road by the chokidah of the Settlement, once the head man of these Haburas, and this man had insisted, in spite of my wish to leave it in the carriage, on carrying a heavy coat which I had been wearing on account of the cold. When I noticed the distance which still lay between us and the Settlement, the sun being now at its hottest, and the walk of a good heating nature in spite of the cold air from the snow mountains, I spoke of this coat to the Brigadier and asked whether it could not be left on the ground till we returned. He laughed and said, 'Oh, the chokidah feels no weight, I assure you; have you noticed him?' I turned and saw that the man was literally quivering with pride. 'He is a fine fellow,' said the Brigadier, 'by far the best of the Haburas, and to appear in the Settlement carrying the coat of a white man, will be an event of great consequence to him. Long after you are back in England, he will remind his people that he carried the Sahib's coat through the village. When you think that a year or two ago he was a dacoit, probably a murderer, it is rather striking. But these Criminal Tribes, the best of them at any rate, are like that; trust them, put them on their honour, give them authority; and they are splendid.' I asked him to thank the chokidah for putting himself to so much trouble on my account. When he got the message, he turned to me with eyes that flashed, showed me white teeth in the proudest of smiles, and salaamed with a grave dignity.

We passed through the gateway of the Settlement—a most rickety and fragile pair of gates like magnified hurdles—and greeted by a Native Salvationist

who lives among the people—came into this little centre of reclamation, this village of Haburas.

The place was like a good-sized farm-yard, 120 yards square, with the difference that the low mud hovels enclosing it were not for animals but for humanity. Here and there in the centre were young trees bandaged and swathed in reeds to protect them from the buffaloes and goats which roamed about among the people. Everywhere one saw cocks and hens of a rather sorry description, and dogs of no description at all. Against the walls of the houses men were lying in a half-sleep, their eyes blinking in the sunlight. In the entrances to the hovels one saw mothers searching in the heads of their children for lice and fleas. Little naked boys dragging sticks too long for them through the dust, stopped in their dissipation of chasing fowls, to stare at the visitors. Some of the children wore round their necks a string hanging with stones, beads, bones, and claws—the gift of their priest; they were all horribly dirty. A man came towards us carrying a child on his arm, and leading another by the hand; he wore the most pathetic expression on his face, bowed himself earthwards, and then looked at me with all the imploring appeal of a practised beggar in London but wedded with such a poignancy and profundity of sincerity that I was touched to the heart. 'He wants you to know,' said the Native Salvationist, 'that his wife died last week, and that he is very sad.'

An old man rose from the dust as we approached him, and stood before me, a living skeleton. One could have said every bone was visible in his body, from the knife-edged ribs to the most delicate tendons in the wrist. Such poverty of body I have seen but once before; such age but seldom; such living death

never. He stood there, his arms extended from the side, his hands open, his almost invisible eyes peering at me from the depths of the sockets, the hairless skull bowed towards his breast. It was his welcome.

'This man,' said the young Salvationist, 'is very old. He remembers the Mutiny.'

I noticed a brown string bound tightly round his wrist, so that it was almost buried in the withered skin. 'How did he come by that string?' I asked. The old man told the Salvationist in a quavering voice that it had been tied there by the priest as a cure for spleen. I asked some questions about his life, and standing there in the sunshine and the dust, with his chest curved inward, his knees standing far over, and his pathetic arms hanging feebly at his sides, he told us what he could remember of the past.

He was born, he said, when the tribe was on a long march. He remembers that as a child he lived in villages, jungle villages, but that as he grew older he was always marching about, here and there, to and fro. He never worked except to hunt; the Haburas eat lizards, cats, mice, tortoises, foxes and jackals. He was taught religion by his parents. If he never ate rabbit, they told him, he would go to a happy place when he died. That is the only commandment he was ever taught—Thou shalt not eat rabbit. It was for him all the law and the prophets, and as he had a wholesome fear of devils he was careful to keep it. The rabbit appears to occupy in the superstitions of the Haburas the place more amply filled by the cow in those of the Hindus. As for stealing and murder, these things were not considered wrong. All the Haburas go in for dacoity, housebreaking and murder.

He told us that he is perfectly sure devils exist and that they haunt the world and afflict humanity. On one occasion, he told us, as a party of which he was a member were returning at night from the jungle, a female devil suddenly rose from the earth and caught hold of him by the arm; he shook her off and hastened after the others, who had taken to their heels. Next day one of the party went blind and never saw again.

I asked if the Haburas pray to the devils. He told us that they pray regularly to the evil spirits and offer sacrifices to them, convinced that all the trouble and sickness and harassing which afflict them proceed from the devils. He said the Haburas are terribly afraid to die because of the demons. The demons are so bad now; what will they be in the next world and after death? Terrible, terrible! He shook his old head, heaved a sigh, and moisture welled up into his almost sightless eyes. The young Salvationist laid a hand on his arm, said something to him which was evidently intended for encouragement, and we passed on. I looked back and saw that the poor old being was still shaking his head.

We came upon a group of more vigorous and cheerful men, who grinned self-consciously and behaved like nervous children when we stopped to speak to them. I asked if they could show me one of the lizards they eat. A man went off, dived into a hovel, and returned with a big, fat, dust-coloured lizard which he dropped at my feet. I was surprised to see that this creature, still living, made no effort to escape; it remained prone on the ground, its tongue shooting from its thin lips, its bead-like eyes blinking in the light. 'They cook it alive,' said the Indian Salvationist; 'they make a fire, throw the

lizard in, and when it is baked they remove the skin, which easily comes off, and eat the flesh.'

'But,' I said, 'does it make no effort to escape?'

'Oh, no,' he replied; 'you see, they break the backbone directly they catch the creature.' He stooped and lifted the lizard from the ground. 'This one has its back broken.'

One was shocked, of course, inexpressibly shocked, but—'they know not what they do.' For to these men, from the first hour of consciousness, life is a hideous torture and a frightful wretchedness. Haunted by devils, oppressed by their priests, harried and driven by police, they inhabit a universe which is full of oppugnance, hostility, and cruelty; they are wanderers on an earth which shows them no kindness, which hides even its mice and lizards from them; which burns up their bodies with heat and buries its water deep under the ground where they cannot reach it—a universe without love, without happiness, without rest; a universe which flashes a sword in their face whithersoever they turn and stands ever ready to strike them from behind with the dagger of their own necessities. If you could look into the faces of these people you would see there a bitterness, a hopelessness, and a despair such as would almost terrify your well-being and make you afraid. They are like men who have been stretched on the rack, broken on the wheel, and cast into the wilderness to die. They have none of the rounded animalism and dough-like stolidity of the Doms; they are just human, just living, just conscious. Nature has brought them to that point where they can experience suffering and exercise reflection, and then has abandoned them.

But dreadful as they are and unintentionally brutal as they are, these men respond to human kindness.

There are only a few of them ever likely to become intelligent weavers and carpenters, but they may in time succeed as scientific husbandmen of a rather primitive type; and certainly there is ample evidence to show that in their hearts there is something which welcomes kindness, is grateful for kindness, and endeavours to express gratitude.

The Salvationist's wife, an Indian, who lives with her husband and children in this mud enclosure —a very pretty and cheerful little creature—told me that she is not in the least afraid of the Haburas. 'At first I was afraid; there was a great fight one night; and I thought they would kill each other; but my husband went and spoke to them and they were quiet. Some of the men and women are really trying to be good. Some of them *are* good. I like them very much. They are just like children; if you treat them like children they will do what you ask them and listen to you when you try to teach them.'

It is only quite lately that the Haburas came into the hands of the Salvation Army, and experienced for the first time in their existence the influence of kindness. In another generation or two they will be a fine race of useful and upright people.

I pointed to the gates as we went out, and asked the Brigadier whether such a flimsy protection was sufficient at night.

'No,' he said, with a smile, 'but *there* we have all the protection we need'—and he pointed to the proud and strutting chokidah whose body was turned that the Haburas might be quite certain that he really did carry the Sahib's coat upon his arm.

THE LION IN THE WAY

It is a foolish calumny to exhibit the Indian Government, as some men now do, in the character of a lolling epicure or a bedizened circus master. There may be, as there are in all governments, matters for criticism, but I think there is no government in the world more earnest in the cause of progress and enlightenment than the Government of India, no government in the world than can show a more impressive record of achievement, no government that is served by a more faithful, industrious, and human-hearted Civil Service. It is enough for the critics of this Government, if they can obtain one or two narratives of English rudeness to Indian gentlemen, to condemn the whole Government; and the visitations of plague and famine are sufficient for them to prove that the Government is idle and iniquitous.

What is the real truth? From men of such commanding genius as Sir John Hewett down to the humblest engineer employed by the State, the whole Indian Government is ceaselessly employed in developing the resources of the country and promoting the prosperity of democracy. The Government, for instance, supplies 'more than a third of the total irrigation of the country.'

Not only do these canals increase prosperity:

they create it. Two of the Punjab canals literally have converted desolate uninhabited plains into thriving countries. Along the banks of the Chenab canal now stretch fields and villages inhabited by a million people, where twelve years ago a few nomads wandered over a desert of parched earth and camel-thorn. The State irrigation works of India are, of their kind, the greatest and most beneficent triumphs of engineering that the world has seen.*

Sir Louis Dane said to me in his picturesque way, 'We are adding an Egypt a year to the Empire by our canals, but England takes no notice.' All this Socialistic work is nothing to the Socialist at home. Let a young tea planter object in his railway carriage to a Native who collects at bedtime his lice in a box, lest he should hurt them by lying on them, and the fact that the Indian Government has bestowed happiness and prosperity on a million people inhabiting what was once a desert of parched earth, is but a flourish of jingoism to the outraged propriety of our universal reformer.

Perhaps few people in England realize, from the Tory who violently supports it to the Socialist who as violently defames it, how far the Government of India has gone along the road of what we should term in England the wildest and most godless Socialism. To begin with the soil of India is national property, and the land tax is national revenue. Imagine such a state of things in England! Again, the railways of India are national property, and the State lets them out to Syndicates and largely controls their management. Imagine such a condition of things in England! Again, the national

* *Studies of Indian Life and Sentiment,* by Sir Bamfylde Fuller, p. 195.

revenue of India, with no Navy to pay for, is devoted in enormous sums to the development of the country. Imagine such a thing in England! Strange is it not that the home Conservative defends in India what he would die to oppose in England, and the Socialist attacks in India what he so eloquently demands for England!

Let the reader judge between the poor calumny of these extreme Socialists and the sober words of Sir John Hewett. That great administrator, in addressing an Industrial Conference, convened by himself, to increase the prosperity of the United Provinces, had the honesty and courage to make these following references before an audience composed chiefly of Indians:—

'One experienced manager of a cotton mill in these provinces, speaking at the Industrial Conference at Benares in 1905, said:—

'"Go where you will and search where you may, you will find everywhere the same complaint, and that is the poor quality of labour. And it is poor because the labouring man is not thrifty. He only values money for whatever it can give him at the moment. He does not value work for work's sake. To him it is unfortunately a matter of complete indifference whether his work is bad or good. He does not value time, because his practice is not to do as much as possible in a given time, but as little as possible."

'One of the leading merchants in Calcutta writes to me as follows:—

'"Keep in mind, however, the good old British system of apprenticeship which ensures a boy mastering his craft and generally loving it too. The Indian people don't go to work in the mills for the love of the thing, but to make a living. I have spent

thirty-three years inside mills here, but not one Indian has sugested an improvement in machinery or treatment of raw material. Such a state of things would be impossible in Britain. The workman there is very low down in the scale who does not plan and think out schemes to make his tools more effective."

'Mr. Chatterjee has noticed the low intellectual standard of the handloom weavers, and advocates "a very wide extension of primary education among the weaving classes."'

And he proceeded as follows:—

'Gentlemen, when I began my address I said that the problem before us was no light one. It is equally certain that it is of the utmost importance to this country that every effort should be made to solve it without delay. In no country that I know of have the conditions now existing in India ever presented themselves before. We have a large and expanding railway system; we have four or five great centres of industry which would compare favourably with many of the industrial centres of Europe; we have the richest possible collection of mineral and vegetable products; we have a foreign trade of nearly 212 millions sterling, much of which consists in the export of our valuable raw products in return for manufactured articles made in the United Kingdom and foreign countries. In certain of our ports you might imagine yourself in one of the bustling cities of Europe. Take a few miles' journey into the interior of the country, and you will see hardly any signs of industrial enterprise, and will at once recognize that you are in a country the inhabitants of which are far too much dependent on a single industry, viz. agriculture. For such a condition of things we can find no precedent, and it is vain to

look for precedent in our efforts to remedy it. Two problems set themselves palpably before us. First, we must educate people so as to divert their energies to industrial pursuits other than agricultural. We must educate skilled labour for all our industries. We must develop among our workmen an interest in their work to replace the feeling that the day's work is only done for the day's wage; and we must bring up educated foremen, supervisors, and managers. We must encourage research into the potential value of our raw produce. Secondly, we must endeavour to overcome the shyness of capital, and success in this respect cannot be achieved unless the leaders of the people throw themselves enthusiastically into the work.

'We have now to consider on the facts that will be laid before us what principles we can and should adopt. I have no fear that you will shrink from your responsibilities as the most representative body hitherto assembled in India to grapple with these weighty problems. I have no fear that you will be timid in experiment or fearful of risk where novel conditions must be dealt with, or shackled by precedent where no true precedent exists. I have no fear that you will accept past failure without investigating its causes to see if they cannot be removed. For my part I consider that the object to be gained is worth a heavy sacrifice. I confess that my imagination is powerfully affected by the opportunities of the present occasion. We cannot regulate the sunshine and the shower, the seed time and the harvest; that is beyond the power of man. But we can control, to some extent, the disposal of the products of the earth, thereby opening new avenues to employment and spreading greater prosperity over the land. We may make some mistakes; we may spend some

money unprofitably; but I am confident that we are entering to-day on labours which will not be in vain.'

Do not these remarks convince one of an honest determination and even an enthusiastic devotion, in the cause of Indian prosperity? Are they not the utterances of a practical statesman whose supreme objective is the progress and development of the common people?

Such is the spirit which animates the Indian Government. Into whatever province I went I found men of great ability and strong earnestness, spending themselves for the peoples of India, giving their days to the labour of promoting the wealth and happiness of democracy—and enthusiastic about it. In no single province did I hear of any legislation which by the greatest stretch of imagination could be designated class legislation; the entire energies of Government, the entire forces of a brilliant and assiduous Civil Service, are devoted to the uplifting and safeguarding of Indian democracy.

I do not strain metaphor when I liken the twelve hundred Englishmen at the head of the Indian Government to the managers of a commercial enterprise whose whole object and purpose in existence is the prosperity of their undertaking. Between each province there is a jealousy, a trade rivalry, a spirit of competing enthusiasm. It is the strain and energy of these countrymen of ours to excel each other in the great adventure of Indian prosperity.

Consider for a moment what this Government has done. First, it has established peace throughout the length and breadth of India, a peace in which the humblest outcast can walk unafraid and the most industrious pursue his calling without risk. This by itself, considering the racial conflicts and religious

animosities of the immense continent, is an achievement of the first magnitude. But the Government has not been content with this achievement. It has lighted the torch of education, and it has preached the gospel of humanity. The widow is no longer allowed to immolate herself upon the pyre of her husband; the rich man is no longer allowed to rob and oppress the poor; the devotees are no longer allowed to fling themselves under the wheels of Jagannát; torture has ceased as a legal instrument, and human sacrifices have been stamped out. Hospitals have been built for the poor whom the Brahman priest and the caste doctor would not touch. Colleges have been set up for the youth who desires learning. The doors of the Civil Service have been opened freely to Indians of every race and caste. Small-pox has been largely brought under control. Famine is recognized as Government's concern. And the revenue of the State has been devoted with lavish hands to reclaiming the desert, regenerating humanity, and prospering the hand of Science. A more Socialistic Government, as I said above, is scarcely to be found in the whole world. If it is not a Government of the people for the people, it is a Government of enlightened European democracy working for progress, enlightenment, and truth among a people dominated and degraded and enslaved by a religious aristocracy. It is a Government which has bestowed Freedom on those who were slaves.

Never was the real position of things in India better stated than by Mr. Valentine Chirol in the 'Conclusion' to his great monograph on 'Indian Unrest':—

We do not rule India, as is sometimes alleged,

> by playing off one race or one creed against another and by accentuating and fostering these ancient divisions, but we are able to rule because our rule alone prevents these ancient divisions from breaking out once more into open and sanguinary strife. British rule is the form of government that divides Indians the least. The majority of intelligent and sober-minded Indians who have a stake in the country welcome it and support it because they feel it to be the only safeguard against the clash of rival races and creeds, which would ultimately lead to the oppressive ascendency of some one race or creed; and the great mass of the population yield to it an inarticulate and instinctive acquiescence because it gives them a greater measure of security, justice, and tranquillity than their forbears ever enjoyed.

The same writer in summing up the tributary causes of modern unrest—

> the great confused movement which is stirring the stagnant waters of Indian life—

enumerates—

> the steady impact of alien ideas on an ancient and obsolescent civilization; the more or less imperfect assimilation of those ideas by the few; the dread and resentment of them by those whose traditional ascendency they threaten; the disintegration of old beliefs, and then again their aggressive revival; the careless diffusion of an artificial system of education, based none too firmly on mere intellectualism, and bereft of all moral or religious sanction; the application of Western theories of administration and of jurisprudence to a social formation stratified on lines of singular rigidity; the play of modern economic forces upon primitive conditions of industry and trade; the constant

and unconscious but inevitable friction between subject races and their alien rulers; the reverberation of distant wars and distant racial conflicts; the exaltation of an Oriental people in the Far East; the abasement of Asiatics in South Africa—all these and many other conflicting influences culminating in the inchoate revolt of a small but very active minority which, on the one hand, frequently disguises under an appeal to the example and sympathy of Western democracy a reversion to the old tyranny of caste and to the worst superstitions of Hinduism, and, on the other hand, arms, with the murderous methods of Western Anarchism, the fervour of Eastern mysticism compounded in varying proportions of philosophic transcendentalism and degenerate sensuousness.

I have the highest authority for saying that Indian unrest, while it is a troublesome matter, is not sufficiently serious to cause alarm. It is impossible that any mutiny could dislodge the British Raj, and the result of a sanguinary revolution, if it ever came to that would (I am told) only serve to make us better friends. Without artillery the mutineers would be powerless against our trained forces; and the telegraph, the telephone, and wireless telegraphy are weapons in the hands of Government not only to guard against surprise but to attack instantly at every point of danger. Furthermore, there is no indication that the revolutionists dream of so prodigious a folly as a second mutiny; all the evidence points to the likelihood that they will even abandon murder and assassination and develop some form of passive resistance or universal strike.

The best way to prevent any such catastrophe is

the original policy of the Indian Government, a policy which is now receiving the support of all cultured and sensible people, namely, a policy of industrial development. And I should like to say that there is not a province or district in India, the Government of which does not gratefully acknowledge the great assistance it has received in this field of enterprise from the Salvation Army. To the Salvation Army belongs the credit of Land Banks, the revival of spinning as a cottage industry,* the growing of the most suitable mulberries for silkworms, the employment of Criminal Tribes in agriculture, the extended use of cassava, and many other highly important developments in trade and industry.

For too long the young men of India have regarded Western education only as a ladder to Civil Service employment or as an avenue to the Bar. Disappointed of employment after years of admirable thrift and most painful study, they have become the easy and embittered victims of the seditionist and the priest. To turn their attention from the learned professions to the active field of commercial and industrial expansion, to give them the glow of enterprise and the courage of initiative, this is the policy of the Indian Government and already it is beginning to justify itself.

'The hour of political reform,' said Madame de Rémusat, 'is also that of educational schemes.' India illustrates the truth of this significant saying, and the whole future of the continent may be said to hang on the educational schemes which are now fermenting in the minds of people conscious of a

* The improved handloom invented by an English Salvationist in India has won gold medals and first prizes at innumerable exhibitions, and is now being largely adopted by the Government as a means for saving the millions of hand weavers from extinction.

political existence. On this subject, beyond venturing to express the opinion that Government should raise the salaries of schoolmasters to a point which will attract the first and noblest minds in the country—perhaps the simplest solution of the Educational Question in England as well as in India—I will make a few quotations from the addresses of Sir George Clarke, Governor of Bombay, to show my readers in what spirit the Indian Government is confronting perhaps the most difficult of all its problems:—

'In words which ought to be printed in letters of gold in every class room in the world, Ruskin has defined what should be the aims of the schoolmaster. "The entire object of education," he wrote, "is to make people not merely do the right things, but enjoy the right things—not merely industrious, but to love industry—not merely learned, but to love learning—not merely pure, but to love purity—not merely just, but to hunger and thirst after justice." Those are counsels of perfection enshrining ideals which may be unattainable except in individual cases. Yet surely Senates of Universities and Governments, which have grave responsibilities for the education of the people, in India especially, should hold fast to such ideals which supply the only valid tests by which their educational achievements can be judged. In so far as education in India produces results approximating to the conditions laid down by Ruskin, it will be a life-giving force, purifying and invigorating the body politic. It can only accomplish these results if the true ends are ever kept in view by those who direct its policy and its methods.

'Our education is never complete. We can and we ought to go on learning to our life's end, and

at best Collegiate training is but a foundation upon which we may build if we choose. To those of you who have made no plans for the future, I suggest consideration of the teacher's profession. It is poorly paid as I have pointed out. It is not honoured as it should be and will be in time to come; but there is no other walk of life in which a young Indian can render his country so great and so lasting a service. It is the earnest and conscientious teacher alone who can train the minds and bodies and help to form the characters of the rising generation. He only can effectively fight the good fight against superstition, ignorance and ruinous customs. The noble spirit of self-renunciation dwells among you, and in the ranks of our teachers we have some shining examples of practical devotion. As I hope I have explained, we need many more such examples, and for those of you who will accept self-sacrifice and forgo material advantage fine careers are open—careers which will develop what is best in you and will assuredly bring you abiding happiness. I conclude my address as I began with some words of Ruskin in which we may all find help and inspiration: "Let every dawn of morning be to you as the beginning of life, and every setting sun be to you as its close; then let every one of these short lives leave its sure record of some kindly thing done for others, some goodly strength or knowledge gained for yourselves." To the young men and women who to-day end their period of pupilage and stand at the great parting of the ways in their lives I can offer no truer advice than these noble words.'

From these brief extracts the fair-minded reader will perceive not only that the Educational Question in India is regarded in a wise and statesmanlike manner, but that the spirit which informs the Indian

Government is one of which England has reason to be proud. There is in that Government, whatever its shortcomings, a note of fatherliness, a strain of paternal tenderness; and however implacable it may be to fomenters of disorder and preachers of sedition, it acts as a providence to the law-abiding millions of India, and seeks their welfare while it covers their weakness with the shield of the British Navy.

There is a Lion in the way, but this Lion is not so fierce as he is painted. Let any man turn to the past history of India and compare those blood-stained pages with the documents of the past fifty years, and he must come to the conclusion, if he is a just judge, that the presence of the British Lion in India has been a mercy to that country and a blessing to civilization.

In the attitude of Government towards Education, in their realization that moral teaching is essential, and that the schoolmaster should serve commerce as well as literature, one perceives the great hope of the future. And we may be certain that just as the Indians free themselves from the incivilities, isolations, and social barbarisms of their perishing superstitions, so they will meet in the Englishmen of India a body of men not only willing to be their friends but ready to share with them even more than at the present moment the burden of Government.

THE NEW BIRTH

'It was Christianity,' says Mr. Bernard Lucas, 'which awoke the West from the sleep which followed the mighty activity of the Greek mind, and set her feet in the path of true progress. It is Christianity which has stirred India from her still longer sleep, and it will be Christianity which will offer to her the material for a spiritual life and thought which will bring untold blessing to the world.' Indirectly, as I have attempted to show all through this book, the religion of Jesus has exercised a vast and miraculous influence on the peoples of India; and this influence would unquestionably have been vaster, more miraculous, and *direct,* if Christianity had been presented to India by a united and rejoicing Christendom as the blessing and good-news of a Heaven-Father.

In concluding this book I should like to leave in the reader's mind, with the sentiment of hope, the stronger and more masculine inspiration of an earnest purpose. India can be won for progress, because it can be won for Christ; and it can be won for Christ swiftly and victoriously if the followers of Jesus awaken to the new-birth of Christianity and give themselves with enthusiasm to this moving spirit of emerging truth.

What is this new-birth of a religion whose glory

is that never once has it stood still but always has marched abreast of the conquering human mind? In a single word, it is a resurrection from sorrow to joy. All that the strokes of science have inflicted on this religion is to destroy its accretions; the religion itself rises from the ruin of those accretions with its first beauty undiminished and its first incomparable glory heightened and enhanced. No longer do men regard themselves as living under the frown of the displeasure of the Infinite; no longer do they feel themselves to be miserable and guilty wretches crawling through the hostilities of threescore years and ten to the anguish of eternal torment; no longer have they any consciousness of the Everlasting God as a blundering Creator, a devil-thwarted Providence, a sulking, sullen, and disappointed Omnipotent. Fear towards the Universe has died out of the European mind. No longer, therefore, can they regard Jesus as a sacrificial victim. The sins which punish the body and narrow the sympathies, which embitter existence and hamper progress, they recognize now in the light of God's evolving revelation as the inheritance of a remote and soulless animalism from which they have been mercifully and most patiently brought by the inspiration of a holy Spirit. They have ceased to think of a Devil in their recognition that the first parent of all sickness, sorrow, misery, and evil is human Ignorance. Every man who has dispelled ignorance by the light of Knowledge they recognize as a servant of truth and a minister of God. And they will never again, so long as civilization advances, surrender their reasons and their souls to the magician, the soothsayer, and the priest.

In the first brightness of absolute knowledge, when the Churches trembled and the atheist made

his boast, it seemed as if Jesus had fallen from the glory of Saviour to the humbler greatness of prophet and idealist. But it was only for a little while. The human heart, whose emotions are ahead of all knowledge, the human heart created by God and restless till it rest in Him, looked back across the æons of its journey under the stars to see what light from heaven had streamed upon the pathway of antiquity, what voice from God had sounded through the confusion of times past; and there was none greater than Jesus. In a sublime loveliness of beauty, He met the searching gaze of the troubled, backward-looking legions of humanity; and when they turned to go forward again, He was there in front of them—the true Shepherd and the Light of the World.

He remains not only the one Ideal of humanity, but the sole Hope of immortal life. He is divine because He lives still in the midst of humanity. He is a Saviour because He still exalts human nature. He is the Way, because our divinest instincts proclaim it right to follow Him: the Truth, because in Him alone can the nations advance with safety: the Life, because by Him alone can the soul be born again.

It is quite certain that men will come to Him more and more; indeed, He has never been so diligently sought, so passionately desired, as in these present days; the very controversy which still rages round the four little simple beautiful documents which preserve for us the essential sweetness of His Character, is but a witness to His attraction; nor can any man imagine a time in which it will be for the world as if He had never existed. But, there is one immense and separating difference between the present-day quest of Jesus and the quest of other times. It is not with a hunger to surrender the

reason and to rest in the bosom of authority like a tired and frightened child, that the world now seeks the Christ; it seeks Him by the reason and for the reason, swept towards Him it is true by the purest instincts and divinest emotions of the heart, but determined in the strength of its God-given reason to find the absolute Jesus, not a false Christ, not a Chimæra, not a Legend.

And it is surely the business of those to whom Christ is a blessing and a power, to clear away from before the feet of those who seek Him all the obstacles and barricades of error which timorous ignorance and jealous superstition have set up in every age between the world and its Light, and which still persist for the darkness of unnumbered souls.

India, as I hope this book may be the means of showing, brings home to the honest mind with an irresistible force, the knowledge that well-nigh all our Christian ceremonial and ritual is the vestigial product of superstition and idolatry. And India teaches us that a sacrificing priesthood engirded by ceremonial and ritual has always been the instrument of pessimism, terror, and abasement. Reflection on these two indisputable facts must force the mind to their two logical and illuminating conclusions, conclusions which, the more they penetrate the human conscience, the more swiftly will they hasten the new-birth of Christianity. We must conclude that the ceremonial and ritual of a degraded superstition cannot be the true method of a spiritual religion; and equally are we forced to the conclusion that the pessimism of our religion, so similar to the pessimism of Hinduism, must have its origin in the tradition and authority which have so closely copied the methods of superstition.

Out of these conclusions there rises the new Christianity, the 'evangelium,' or 'glad-tidings' of Jesus. Always there has been this Christianity living in the hearts of men, but it has never yet become a world religion. The morality of Jesus has saved the world from death, but the religion of Jesus has not yet fired the world with joy. Not until men live beautiful and fearless lives in the sure knowledge that God is a Father, will the earth ring with joy and the soul of man sing with blessing. And never will the Fatherhood of God come home to humanity while the Athanasian definitions, the quarrelling theologies, and the trivial superstitions of symbolism stand between the souls of men and the pronouncement of Christ—'I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly. . . . My Joy no man taketh from you. . . . Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is My brother, and My sister, and mother. . . . Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy-laden. . . . I am the Light of the World. . . . When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion. . . . Our Father Which art in heaven.'

It is the work of the Twentieth Century to rescue the glad-tidings of Jesus from the ruins of the gloom, and menace, and pessimism of a falling ecclesiasticism. We cannot hope for an immediate millennium or even anticipate a cessation of hostilities. There will be fierce fighting, a period of darkness and despair, perhaps a moment of relapse into paganism. But the victory will come. Christ will conquer because there is no other.

And I cannot imagine a more hopeful beginning for this great conflict than that which India appeals to us to make now; a beginning which all those

who really rely upon Christ, and not upon the habits or traditions of a particular Church, should be most willing to make—the deliverance of a *single message*.

It is impossible at present that the missionaries should teach either a uniformity in acts of worship or that they should agree to an entire absence of ceremonial; but they would be only the soulless parts of a dead machinery if they refused to consider whether they cannot agree to present to India a single message of the essentials of Christianity.

The Fatherhood of God, the necessity for a cleansed heart, the certainty of rest in Christ, the surety of everlasting joy and felicity for the pure and righteous —these simple things are the essentials of that teaching which is now broken up into a hundred contradictory, contending, and competing theses. Is it not possible to agree that only the essentials, the indisputable and beautiful essentials of the Master's teaching, should be presented to India, that all which lies beyond the moral essentials should be left to India herself to discover and evolve?

At least let the Churches decide this central and determining question—Is the religion of Jesus only an evolution of the older religion of Buddha, the religion of sorrow, resignation, and non-existence, or is it the sole and solitary religion of joy, action, and hunger after God?

Not only India waits for that answer, but the whole world.

My book is finished.

That it will vex some people and give a dire offence to many, I am well aware: that it has a thousand imperfections and affords but a glimpse of a vast country and a strangely heterogeneous humanity, no one could be more poignantly sensible than

myself; nevertheless, on one score I venture to express satisfaction with my work, and on this score I am full willing that it should stand its trial. *It tells the truth.*

It destroys the illusion that there is any mysterious holiness, or any magic of occultism, in the religion of Hinduism.

It shows the position at which Christianity now stands in the life of India.

It proves that ceremonialism, symbolism, and priestcraft are the instruments of a dying superstition, not the spirit of a living and achieving religion.

And it points to a true interpretation of rational religion as the one strength we possess, under an enlightened and benevolent government, to safeguard evolving civilization in a country roused from immemorial torpor to a knowledge of science and the boasts of materialism.

These are the solid and practical truths concerning modern India, truths which it is urgent all men should recognize and know; and because my book states these truths clearly and simply, and proves them out of the mouths of Indians themselves, I dare to think that in spite of many shortcomings and in spite of innumerable blemishes, it is a good book and a useful book.

NOTES

Page 11

The success of the Salvation Army in India must not be ascribed only to the genius of Fakir Singh. To begin with, his marriage to a daughter of General Booth carried into the mission field of India one of the most able children of a unique family, and the influence of Emma Booth in the affairs of the Salvation Army in India is felt to this day. The success of the Army, as so many of the narratives in this book witness, seems really to belong to the sincerity of its missionaries, both European and Indian. When Fakir Singh left India for America the work proceeded without let or hindrance, carried forward by the earnestness and devotion of its officers and converts. The personality of General Booth has also been a vast influence in this crusade. His visits to India have been occasions of extraordinary enthusiasm. It is also his plan of employing women as missionaries which has had such an awakening effect upon the peoples of India, particularly the poorer classes who are so wonderfully amenable to sympathy and gentleness. If I have formed a correct opinion, the secret of the success of the Salvation Army in India is the same in America, England, and most of the other countries where it has organized itself, to wit, tremendous earnestness carried forward on a tide of sweeping enthusiasm inspired by unquestioning faith in the Bible and unfailing love for humanity. And one must not omit from our count, the organizing genius of Mr. Bramwell Booth who from the International Headquarters of the Salvation Army in Queen Victoria Street, directs this great tide of world-wide enthusiasm and keeps the Army ever at its work of redemption.

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Page 36

The following account from the book of Abbé Dubois mentioned below, will give the reader a luminous idea of the Hindu's attitude both toward women and sorrow :—

The happiest death for a woman is that which overtakes her while she is still in a wedded state. Such a death is looked

upon as the reward of goodness extending back for many generations; on the other hand, the greatest misfortune that can befall a wife is to survive her husband.

Should the husband die first, as soon as he breathes his last the widow attires herself in her best clothes and bedecks herself with all her jewels. Then, with all the signs of the deepest grief, she throws herself on his body, embracing it and uttering loud cries. She holds the corpse tightly clasped in her arms until her parents, generally silent spectators of this scene, are satisfied that this first demonstration of grief is sufficient, when they restrain her from these sad embraces. She yields to their efforts with great reluctance, and with repeated pretences of escaping out of their hands and rushing once again to the lifeless remains of her husband. Then, finding her attempts useless, she rolls on the ground like one possessed, strikes her breast violently, tears out her hair, and manifests many other signs of the deepest despair. Now, are these noisy professions of grief and affliction to be attributed to an excess of conjugal affection, to real sorrow? The answer will appear rather perplexing, when we remark that it is the general custom to act in this manner, and that all these demonstrations are previously arranged as a part of the ceremonies of mourning.

After the first outbursts of grief, she rises, and, assuming a more composed look, approaches her husband's body. Then in one continuous strain, which would hardly be possible under real affliction, she apostrophizes her husband in a long series of questions, of which I give a summary below :—

'Why hast thou forsaken me? What wrong have I done thee that thou shouldst thus leave me in the prime of my life? Had I not for thee all the fondness of a faithful wife? Have I not always been virtuous and pure? Have I not borne thee handsome children? Who will bring them up? Who will take care of them hereafter? Was I not diligent in all the duties of a household? Did I not sweep the house every day, and did I not make the floor smooth and clean? Did I not ornament the floor with white tracery? Did I not cook good food for thee? Didst thou find grit in the rice I prepared for thee? Did I not serve up to thee food such as thou lovedst, well seasoned with garlic, mustard, pepper, cinnamon, and other spices? Did I not forestall thee in all thy wants and wishes? What didst thou lack while I was with thee? Who will take care of me hereafter?'

And so on. At the end of each sentence uttered in a plaintive chanting tone, she pauses to give free vent to her sobs and shrieks, which are also uttered in a kind of rhythm. The women that stand around join her in her lamentations, chanting in chorus with her. Afterwards, she addresses the gods, hurling against them torrents of blasphemies and imprecations.

She accuses them openly of injustice in thus depriving her of her protector. This scene lasts till her eloquence becomes exhausted, or her lungs are wearied out and she is no longer capable of giving utterance to her lamentations. She then retires to rest for a while, and to prepare some new phrases against the time when the body is being prepared for the funeral pyre.

The more vehement the expressions of a woman's grief, the more eloquent and demonstrative her phrases, the more apparently genuine her contortions on such occasions, so much the more is she esteemed a woman of intelligence and education. The young women who are present pay the most minute attention to all she says or does; and if they observe anything particularly striking in her flights of rhetoric, in her attitudes, or in any of her efforts to excite the attention of the spectators, they carefully treasure it in their memory, to be made use of should a similar misfortune ever happen to themselves. If a wife who was really afflicted by the death of her husband confined herself to shedding real tears and uttering real sobs, she would be thoroughly despised and considered an idiot. The parents of a young widow once complained to me of her stupidity as follows: 'So foolish is she that, on the death of her husband, she did not utter a single word; she did nothing but cry, without saying anything.'

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PAGE 53

'The most popular of the divine hierarchy of the Hindus—the goddess known as the "Great Mother"—is depicted as an ogress. She is black in face: her eyes are fierce: blood drops from crimson mouth and protruding tongue: she is garlanded with human skulls. . . . The cult of Siva has degenerated into phallic-worship in one direction and into demon-worship in the other.' . . . 'Kali is propitiated by bloody sacrifices of buffaloes and goats. To the extremists among her followers sexual restraint is a denial of authority. In her name prostitution has become a temple service, and her attributes have corrupted deplorably the instincts of youth.'—*Studies of Indian Life and Sentiment,* by Sir Bamfylde Fuller.

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PAGE 55

The reader who wishes to make himself acquainted with the barbarous customs which have flourished under Hinduism, from superstitions connected with animals down to mutilations, tortures and human sacrifices (Meriah) could not do better than consult the Ethnographic Notes in Southern India of Mr. Edgar Thurston, published by the Madras Government.

Page 57

Dr. Barnett, Professor of Sanskrit at University College, London—a discriminating admirer of Eastern literature, describes the Brahmanic priestcraft as 'perhaps more crassly material in spirit and in practice than any other in the records of literature.' In *The Heart of India,* page 25, he says of this priestcraft: 'An immensely intricate web of ritual—often of the most gruesome and butcherly kind—was spun around the whole of Indian life, with the avowed object of forcing from the powers of nature the gifts of worldly welfare which were theirs to bestow; and the ghostly power of the Brahman became supreme in the land.'

At pages 19 and 20, he says, 'In Indian metaphor, the gods are the milch-kine of the faithful, the priests their milkers. Wealth and worldly welfare are the chief objects of religion.'

The same author quotes (page 112) some Telugu satires on the Brahmans: 'Will the application of white ashes do away with the smell of a wine-pot? Will a cord cast over your neck make you twice-born? What are you better for smearing your body with ashes? Your thoughts should be set on God alone; for the rest, an ass can wallow in dirt as well as you. The books that are called Vedas are like courtesans, deluding men, and wholly unfathomable: . . ' In spite of this contempt, in spite of a hundred efforts to get rid of this insolently tyrannical and obviously superstitious priestcraft, Brahmanism remains the master of India.

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Page 147

The Abbé Dubois in his admirable book *Hindu Manners, Customs, and Ceremonies,* tells the following stories of two Indians who sought to become holy men after the Hindu fashion:—

'I was a novice for four months,' said one of them, 'under a Sannyasi who had built himself a hermitage in a lonely spot not very far from the town of Bellapuram. Following his instructions, I spent the greater part of each night awake, occupied in keeping my mind an absolute blank and thinking of nothing. I made superhuman efforts to hold my breath as long as possible, and only breathed when I was on the point of fainting. This suffocating exercise made me perspire profusely. One day, at high noon, I thought I saw a bright moon, which seemed to move and sway from side to side. Another time I imagined myself enveloped in darkness at midday. My director, the Sannyasi, who had warned me that while going through this course of penance I should see marvels, was greatly pleased when I mentioned these visions

to him. He congratulated me on the progress I was making, and prescribed fresh exercises which were even more severe than the first. The time was not far distant, he assured me, when I should experience much more surprising results from my penance. At last, worn out by these foolish and fatiguing practices, and fearing lest my brain might really be turned, I left the Sannyasi and his meditative penances, and returned to my former state of life.'

The other man said :—

'The Sannyasi under whose direction I placed myself had built his hermitage at some distance from the fort of Namakal, in a desert spot. Amongst other exercises which he lay down for me, he obliged me to stare at the sky every day without blinking my eyes or changing my position. This prolonged effort inflamed my eyes terribly and often gave me dreadful headaches. Sometimes I thought I saw sparks of fire in the air; at others I seemed to see fiery globes and other meteors. My teacher was much pleased with the success of my efforts and with the progress I was making. He had only one eye, and I knew that he had lost the other in following out this practice, which he assured me was indispensable if I wished to attain to perfect spirituality. But at last I could bear it no longer, and fearing that I might lose the sight of both eyes, I bade farewell to meditation and the celestial firmament. I also tried another kind of exercise for a time. My master told me that an infallible means for making rapid progress towards spirituality was to keep all the apertures of my body completely closed, so that none of the five pranams (winds) which are in it could escape. To do this I had to place a thumb in each ear, close my lips with the fourth and little fingers of each hand, my eyes with the two forefingers, and my nostrils with the two middle fingers; and to close the lower orifice I had to cross my legs and sit very tightly on one of my heels. While in this attitude I had to keep one nostril tightly shut, and leaving the other open I had to draw in a long deep breath; then, immediately closing that nostril, I had to open the other and thoroughly exhale the air I had first inhaled. It was of the greatest importance that the inhalation and the exhalation should not be performed through the same nostril. I continued this exercise until I lost consciousness and fainted away.'

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